

~~11-8.2~~  
A SELECT  
**SET of ESSAYS,**  
DOCTRINAL and PRACTICAL,  
UPON A VARIETY  
Of the most important and inter-  
esting Subjects in DIVINITY.  
IN TWO VOLUMES.

By the REVEREND  
Mr WILLIAM M'EWEN,  
Late Minister of the Gospel in Dundee.

To which is prefixed,  
A PREFACE, containing an account  
of the AUTHOR'S Life and Charac-  
ter; together with a brief descrip-  
tion of the SECESSION.

VOL. I. 12 86

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5  
T O  
HIS GRACE  
J O H N,  
EARL of GLASGOW,  
HIS MAJESTY'S  
HIGH COMMISSIONER  
T O  
The GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the  
CHURCH of SCOTLAND.

MY LORD,

WITHOUT any previous solici-  
tation for acceptance, I  
have taken the liberty to prefix your  
Lordship's name to the following  
sheets.

#### iv DEDICATION.

WHETHER or not the dignity and importance of the subjects treated of, in these volumes, are sufficient to apologize for this unexpected address, your Lordship will at once be able to determine.

THE irresistible motive which induced me to make this intrusion, was, the particular disadvantageous point of view in which the seceding ministers were exhibited before your Lordship, both in the last, and the preceding assembly.

I ASSURE myself, that your Lordship is too well acquainted with the civil and ecclesiastic policy of this free country, to be influenced by any representation of men or principles, that is in the least inconsistent with matters of fact. And that  
when

## DEDICATION. v

when you fix your opinion of any religious body, you will equally abhor the power of prejudice, and the influence of faction.

THAT your Lordship may be enabled, to form a just and proper estimate of the religious principles and temper of the associated ministers, of the Burgher communion, permit me, with the most respectful humility, to present your Lordship with the following specimen of the doctrines relative both to faith and practice, in which they daily instruct those of his Majesty's subjects, who are under their pastoral inspection.

WITH regard to the loyalty, and attachment of that numerous body



## vi DEDICATION.

to our most Gracious Sovereign, and his illustrious house: I need not recal to your Lordship's remembrance the public proof which they gave of their duty to the throne, when, in the year 1746, a bold and dangerous rebellion assaulted it. As there was not so much as a single individual of our communion, who swerved from his duty and allegiance at that memorable period: so I beg leave to assure your Lordship, that they still persist in the same sentiments of duty to the Throne, and loyalty to the best of Princes.

THAT your Lordship may ever be a steady patron of piety; and that pure and undefiled religion may always aggrandize your high character;

DEDICATION. vii

character ; is a request in which my  
brethren join with,

MY LORD,

YOUR GRACE'S

most humble and

most obedient servant,

BRISTOW-STREET,  
Edin. May 23.  
1767.

JOHN PATISON.

THE HISTORY OF THE  
CITY OF BOSTON  
FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT  
TO THE PRESENT TIME

BY  
JOHN A. JOHNSON  
OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

OF THE  
CITY OF BOSTON  
JOHN A. JOHNSON

THE  
CITY OF BOSTON  
JOHN A. JOHNSON

THE  
P R E F A C E.

Containing some ACCOUNT of  
the LIFE and CHARACTER  
of the AUTHOR, &c.

THE Reverend Mr WILLIAM  
M'EWEN, the worthy author  
of the following essays, was de-  
scended from pious and reputable  
parents\*; who spared neither pains  
nor expence, to give him a truly  
Christian and liberal education. To  
this they were greatly encouraged,  
by the early attachment which he  
himself shewed, both to piety and  
learning.

\* He was born in the town of Perth.

His



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HIS constitution of body was rather delicate and weakly; though in common he was tolerably healthy: but his intellectual powers were found and strong. He had a penetrating and comprehensive mind; a fine perception; and an elegant taste. These happy talents were attended with a solidity of judgment, and a sense of the truly beautiful and sublime, peculiar to himself; and still farther heightened, by an imagination and invention equally lively, and a memory uncommonly capacious and retentive.

To cultivate and improve these admirable natural endowments, he employed the most assiduous care, and unwearied industry. By his diligent study of the Roman and Greek classics; of logic and philosophy;

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sophy; of the best English poets and historians; and, above all, of the scriptures of truth, in their originals, with the most judicious and evangelical books of our own and foreign divines; he collected a large stock of the best ideas, and enriched his mind with a variety of select knowledge, and suitable literature.

HIS studies in divinity were assisted for some years, by the advice of the late celebrated Mr Ebenezer Erskine; and finished under the direction of the Reverend Mr James Fisher of Glasgow.

HE was in 1753, licensed to preach the gospel, by the associate presbytery of Dunfermline; and, in the beginning of the year 1754,  
he

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he was ordained by the same presbytery minister of the associate congregation in the town of Dundee.

HAVING, in a solemn and public manner, devoted himself to the more immediate service of the blessed Jesus, in the ministration of his gospel; and had the charge of a particular flock committed to him; he was earnestly desirous to have them grounded in the principles, and actuated by the true spirit of Christ's gospel. Entirely satisfied, that no scheme was ever so wisely calculated, to draw mens affections from iniquity, and attach them to the blessed God; to sweeten their tempers, and from them to true happiness; it was his daily endeavour, by the most easy and engaging methods of instruction,

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tion, to fill their minds with the knowledge of these heavenly doctrines. He longed particularly to have a lively sense of God Almighty's goodness, manifested in freely offering pardon and peace to rebellious sinners in the gospel, impressed on their souls: because from this source, under the influences of the sanctifying Spirit, he was persuaded, that all the noble qualities, the amiable graces, and the important duties, which constitute the dignity or the happiness of our nature could only be derived.

FAR from addressing his hearers in that flattering and dangerous strain, which supposes the powers of the human mind, to be as perfect as ever; or but vitiated in a small degree; or, that the soul of man is possessed of such principles of virtue, as need only to be roused  
b into



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into action; he was solicitously concerned to have them thoroughly convinced, that they were ignorant, guilty, impotent creatures. That from such convictions they might perceive their indispensable need of a Saviour: of a Saviour in all his mediatory offices; as a prophet to instruct them, and, by his word and Spirit, make them wise unto salvation; as a priest to make an atonement and expiation for their sins, and make their persons acceptable to that awful majesty, who dwelleth in light inaccessible; as a king to subdue their iniquities, to write his laws in their hearts, make them partakers of a divine nature, and enable them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

IN



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IN short, the point he chiefly laboured, was, to beget in his people's minds a deep, an abiding sense, that God was their chiefest good; their only sufficient happiness and portion: that the blessed Jesus was the foundation of all their hopes towards God; and the fountain of their pardon, acceptance, and salvation: that all their dependence, for acquiring the beauties of holiness, and tasting the consolations and pleasures of a religious life, was to be placed on the Holy Ghost the Comforter; whose office is to take the things of Christ, and shew them to sinful men\*; and to give them to know the things that are freely given to them of God †.

OUR author's talent of preach-

\* John xvi. 14.

† 1 Cor. ii. 12.

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ing was much admired. The propositions he insisted on were few; but always of very weighty and edifying import, and naturally resulting from the passage of sacred writ under immediate consideration. His explanations were clear and accurate; his proofs plain and decisive; his illustrations beautiful and entertaining; his applications close and searching. All the heads of the discourse remarkably distinct; yet connected in such regular order, and in such a pleasing succession, as gave his instructions the greatest advantage: and every part contributed to the strength and beauty of the whole.

AND indeed such was the depth of his thoughts; such the propriety of his words; and such the variety, force, and fire of his stile; so remarkable

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remarkable was the justness and solidity of his reasoning, and so judicious the change of his method; that notwithstanding he invariably pursued the same end; yet proceeding by different paths, and varying his address, according as he meant to alarm, convince, or comfort; he was so far from growing tedious, that he never failed to please, as well as improve his audience.

IN imitation of the great apostle of the Gentiles, that most amiable and accomplished preacher, he was peculiarly careful to cultivate a spirit of zeal and devotion in all his discourses. Accordingly he was fervent in spirit, as well as cogent in argument. When he argued, conviction flashed; when he exhorted, pathos glowed. And by distributing to each of his audience

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a portion suitable to their several states, he endeavoured rightly to divide the word of truth.

THE same zeal and fervour which influenced and animated his public addresses from the pulpit, appeared also in his discharge of the much neglected duties of catechising; teaching from house to house; and visiting the sick; as well as in the administration of the holy sacraments.

IN the most unaffected devotion towards God, and in a diffusive love to all men; in modesty, humility, and candour; in a gravity of deportment, tempered with becoming cheerfulness; in purity of manners, and integrity of conduct, Mr M'Ewen was a pattern to all  
around



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around him. His hearers had abundant reason to believe, that he lived above this fordid world, even while he was in it: that he was no lover of filthy lucre; no hunter of carnal pleasures: but that his hopes, his desires, and all his views of happiness, were hid with Christ in God: that he directed all his aims to the glory of God; and considered the honour of Christ Jesus as the final cause of his existence: that he carried on no base and sinister design: that he had no separate interest from the glory of his divine Master, and the welfare of his people; but that the whole desire and delight of his soul, was, to set forward their salvation: that by their being made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, his crucified Lord might see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.

ON

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ON the 29th of December 1761, Mr M'Ewen came to Edinburgh. In crossing the water between Kinghorn and Leith, the weather being stormy, he got his cloaths much wetted, which was thought to have been the occasion of the illness which soon after proved fatal to him.

IN all my social intercourses with my dear friend on this occasion, I could not help remarking, a particular inclination in him, to fix the conversation, to that awful, yet delightful subject, the eternal world, which must very shortly receive us. Like one established in Christ, and strong in his faith, I found him, looking for, and hastening to the coming of the day of God, at a time when prospects of another kind engage the affections

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affections of the bulk of mankind. On Sabbath the 3d of January 1762, he preached his last sermon, in Bristow kirk, from that text, Is. lxiii. 4. "For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come."

ON Monday evening he was married at Dalkieth, to the eldest daughter of Mr John Wardlaw, late merchant there. On Wednesday afternoon, he came, along with his friends, to Leith, in his way home to Dundee. That night he was suddenly taken ill in the house where they lodged. His disorder soon issued in a violent fever, which rendered him unfit for all conversation; and, on Wednesday night, the 13th of January 1762, put an end to all his labours, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, and seventh

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venth of his ministry. Cut down in the prime of life and public usefulness, his death was universally lamented as a severe and afflicting loss to his friends, his congregation, the church of God. His body was interred in the church-yard of Dalkieth.

IN December 1758, Mr M'Ewen published at Aberdeen, a sermon preached at the ordination of the Reverend Mr Alexander Dick, intitled, *The great matter and end of gospel-preaching*, from 2 Cor. iv. 5. This sermon was reprinted in the year 1764, and has been much esteemed by many who have read it, not only on account of the clear, comfortable, evangelical strain of doctrine which runs through it; but also on account of the striking, nervous, and pathetic manner of address.



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addresses. In 1763, his meditations on the types, figures, and allegories of the Old Testament, were published in a neat volume 12mo\*.

WITH regard to the following sheets, they contain the substance of what the author originally composed and delivered from the pulpit in the form of sermons. His heart, his time, his study, were entirely devoted to the duties of his

\* The favourable reception which this piece met with from the public, shews, in a much stronger light, the distinguished excellency of it, than any thing else that could be advanced. The Rev. John Erskine, D. D. so remarkable for his candour, intelligence, and precision, speaking of this book, says, in a printed note, " Hervey of the church of England, and M'Ewen of the Secession, are agreeable writers. But to attempt their manner is dangerous, without an uncommonly lively imagination, solid judgment, and correct taste. Luxuriancies of style, generally overlooked in original geniuses, appear ridiculous in their servile imitators."

profession.

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profession. And to contract the force and spirit of a subject into a small compass, and exhibit it to the mind in one clear and easy view, was a branch of study he was remarkably fond of. Therefore though he prepared his discourses for the pulpit with great diligence and accuracy, he frequently employed himself (when he could procure a leisure moment) in digesting them after they had been preached, into the form of little essays. From the author's collection of manuscripts of this kind, the following essays were taken. They were all committed to paper at one sitting; and were never intended for public inspection; and none of them appear to have been written anew, or revised by the author. It will not then be thought strange, if they should

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should not bear a critical examen, with regard to the minutiae of a graceful composition. More important matters engaged Mr M'Ewen's attention; nor was fame as a writer by any means his aim. But it is hoped, the reader who peruses them with the humble, child-like spirit of a Christian, who seeks religious advantage in all he reads, will not lose his labour. He will find a just and lively representation of true Christianity, in a variety of its most important articles, and most distinguishing peculiarities, enforced by a pathetic animated manner, happily conspiring, at once to enlighten the understanding, and to persuade the heart. Repetitions, or a sameness of thought and expression, will doubtless sometimes occur: but this recurrence will be chiefly found in matters which lie

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at the root of all vital religion, and evidently very near to our author's heart; far unlike that thin, starveling, common-place work, which is the produce of a barren head, or an unfeeling heart! As they were the first effusion of thought, so they evidently bear the genuine marks of proceeding more from the heart than the head; which, I hope, will render them no less felt, or worse received. From a few cursory specimens, the reader could form no adequate idea of a work replete with such a vast variety; and therefore I shall conclude my account of these volumes, by observing, that I have not attempted to methodise their contents, or combine them in any regular series, as no order had been observed in the writing of them.

As



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As the Secession has been described in an overture laid before the last General Assembly of the established church of Scotland, not only as a schism, that is remarkably on the growing hand; but as an alarming evil, of threatening aspect to the church, the interest of religion, and the peace of the country; I shall take leave, both for the vindication of our author's character, who was a respectable minister of that communion; and for the information of the public; to subjoin a short narrative of the rise of that memorable event in Scotland.

THE fundamental maxim of the reformation in Scotland, was, That the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, is the only head

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of the church. In connection with this distinguishing position, our reforming ancestors invariably affirmed, that the scriptures of the Old and New Testament are an authentic charter of all the immunities and privileges bestowed by Christ on his church, and contain a full, a perfect, a sufficient, and indeed the only measure of all the ordinances, officers, and duties necessary to her being, establishment, increase, and improvement. From these solid and undeniable principles, they reasoned with an evidence that was irresistible unto the following, and such like conclusions, that may be considered as so many capital pillars on which our divinely excellent and beautiful Presbyterian plan rests. That the church is not now confined to one nation, as before the manifestation

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festation of the promised Messiah in human nature; but consists of all those throughout the whole world, who profess to believe in, and serve, the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not contradict their profession by their habitual practice, together with their children: That because the real temper, and inward disposition of the soul, is only known to the omniscient God, in whose sight all things are naked and open; and because the members of the church are, by divine appointment, called to form themselves into certain social connections, for mutual comfort and usefulness, in which every one is bound to regard his neighbour in the most advantageous light, and to act towards him in the most affectionate manner, by administering counsel, comfort, caution, or

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reproof, as he perceives his temper, appearing from his practice, does require; therefore, the reason and nature of things give their countenance to the scriptural distinction of the church, as visible to the world, or as known only to God: That it is unto this catholic visible church, Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life, to the end of the world: That being gathered by the gospel, it is their bounden duty to enter into church-fellowship; and to continue to observe all things, whatsoever Christ hath commanded; and to set their hearts to do all the words of God's law: That reason and revelation unite all their evidence to assure us, that there must be some government observed in the church; though not to make laws;



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laws; this being the unalienable prerogative of the King whom God hath set over his holy hill; yet to explain and apply, as the circumstances of individual members require, the laws already laid down in the word of divine revelation: That the Christian church having full power in herself to order all her concerns, and regulate all her affairs, independent of any foreign influence; the government of the church is not dependent on, but co-ordinate with the civil: That it is equally incongruous, to maintain, that the civil magistrate, who is the vicegerent of God in the government of every thing civil, should be the slave of church-rulers, obliged implicitly to ratify their decisions; and to place church-authority in subordination to the will and pleasure of civil rulers, as  
competent

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competent judges in spiritual causes :  
That religious liberties are so clearly made over to the enjoyment of the church ; and so unalienably secured by the word, the promise, the oath, and the blood of her glorious head ; that it is no less dishonourable to the wisdom, authority, and goodness of her only Sovereign, than injurious to his body, to innovate, alter, or abridge her charter, as it lies open in the volumes of inspiration : That the power, the authority, and just claims of church and state, are essentially different ; and therefore cannot possibly interfere one with another ; unless, through the ignorance or perverseness of men, they at any time are blended or opposed : That in such a case it is the incumbent duty of all who  
would

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would maintain a good conscience, void of offence, candidly to examine the proper bounds of each of these different objects, according to the scriptures; where the nature, extent, and full latitude, both of the powers conferred on the church herself, and of her immunities from foreign jurisdiction, are clearly and strongly marked; and to walk according to these discoveries and convictions, without offence to God or men.

THE church of Scotland, formed on this noble, this divine plan; and while she stood fast in these liberties, and ordered her conversation and decisions accordingly; looked forth, both at the Reformation, and happy Revolution, as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

SOUNDNESS

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SOUNDNESS and purity of doctrine; strictness and impartiality in the exercise of discipline; were then her distinguishing characteristics. The learning, piety, and diligence of her ministers, insured them the respect of the people; while the solemnity of her administration, and the universal air of seriousness and gravity which appeared through the whole nation, were the terror of her enemies, and the joy of her friends.

BUT as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so were their minds too soon corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ: partly through the abuse of civil authority, stepping out of its own sphere; and in part through the abject timidity, and seeming infatuation of many, otherwise zealous for the incorrupted simplicity of her doctrine, worship, discipline,



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discipline, and government: violent encroachments were made on her beautiful constitution; and it began gradually to be modelled in that taste which might render it the most proper engine of civil policy. It is almost needless to produce any voucher for the truth of this observation, as every one acquainted with our history well knows, with what deep design the plot was laid under James VI. after his advancement to the crown of England, under Charles I. during Laud's administration; under Charles II. and his brother, of infamous memory: nay, even in the latter part of Queen Anne's reign, when it is notourly known a Popish and Jacobitish party had the chief direction of public measures.

To this æra we must fix the date  
of

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of that mischievous and ruining scheme, which has spread sorrow, confusion, and the forest calamities through every corner of our land; once happy, if we had indeed known the things that belong to our peace. I suppose none will be at a loss to know, that I mean the patronage-act 1712\*, revived in resentment of the church of Scotland's distinguished attachment to the family of Hanover.

### THE

\* Although the church of Scotland, at this time, did most zealously, and with the most determined resolution, assert her own intrinsic power, and own her subjection to none but Christ alone, whom God hath set over his holy hill of Zion; she was far from the temper of those Enthusiasts, who, under pretence of rendering to Christ, the things that are his, refuse due honour to lawful authority. A more spirited attachment to the rightful succession in the Hanoverian family, at a time when corruption and Popery influenced every political measure in the state, to secure the throne for a Popish Prince, was perhaps seldom seen in any country, than in Scotland, and among the dissenters

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THE auspicious accession of that illustrious Prince King George I. to the British throne, was the source of many blessings to this country. Among other advantages, we cannot forbear mentioning the act of parliament

senters in our neighbour land; who, on this very account, suffered every hardship that was supposed to be distressing in the tenderest part, only not downright open persecution in body and estate. Among other severities used towards the church of Scotland, by that unjust and tyrannical administration, the revival of patronages which had been totally abolished by the act of parliament 1690, was none of the least distressing. And this they did in direct opposition to one of the two essential, and unalterable articles of the union. For by the Scottish act for a treaty of union 1705, c. 4. It is, "provided also that the said commissioner shall not treat of or concerning any alteration of the worship, discipline, and government of the church of this kingdom, as now by law established." An act immediately before the union, 1706, c. 6. after narrating that the treaty had been reported to parliament, and that it was "reasonable, and necessary, that the true Protestant religion as presently professed within this

d " kingdom,

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parliament 1719; which expressly bears, that if there be no accept-

“ kingdom, with the worship, discipline, and go-  
“ vernment of this church, should be effectually,  
“ and unalterably secured,” does “ establish and  
“ confirm the said true Protestant religion, and  
“ the worship, discipline, and government of this  
“ church, to continue without any alteration to  
“ the people in this land, through all succeeding  
“ generations.” And immediately after the  
union, another act passed to the same purpose;  
and it further statutes and ordains, “ That this  
“ act of parliament, with the establishment there-  
“ in contained, shall be held and observed in all  
“ time coming, as a fundamental and essential  
“ condition of any treaty of union to be conclu-  
“ ded betwixt the two kingdoms without any alte-  
“ ration thereof, or derogation thereto, in any  
“ sort for ever.” Now, since the right of pa-  
tronages had been abolished by the act 1690, as  
inconsistent with the Presbyterian religion, it ne-  
cessarily follows, that the act of Queen Anne, re-  
viving that right, was an infringement of one of the  
unalterable articles of the union, and consequently  
contrary to law: for it surely will not be main-  
tained, that an article, declared to be unalterable,  
may, notwithstanding, be altered. If it may, then  
the only other article on the same footing must go  
too, and our land-tax may be raised above 48,000 l.

ance



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ance of a presentation, the presentation is to be void and null in law \*. This act, as it was undoubtedly intended, so it was excellently calculated to favour the church of Scotland, by putting it in her own power to free herself entirely, from the yoke of patronages, even while the act *decimo Annæ* stood unrepealed.

AND had she been then, or were she even at present, zealously disposed to avail herself of the advan-

\* Stat. 50. Geo. I. cap. 20. § 8. If any patron shall present to a vacant church any person not qualified, or who is a pastor of any other church, or one who shall not accept of the presentation; such presentation shall not be any interruption of the course of time allowed to the patron for presenting, but the *jus devolutum* shall take place as if no such presentation had been offered. § 9. Nothing herein shall prejudice the right of the church as to the trying the qualities of any person presented to any church or benefice. *Swin-ton's abridgment.*

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tage which this act affords her, and which there is all reason to believe the then administration really intended she should derive from it, what blessed fruits might naturally have been expected from her acting up to the true spirit and plan upon which, as a church, she was formed! By discharging all her probationers and ministers from accepting of presentations; the one under pain of losing their licences, and the other of being deposed; she would have abolished patronages, with all the bad consequences accompanying them, at once.

THIS measure, so agreeable to her constitutional laws\*, and so admirably

\* All along from the reformation it had been the fixed, the avowed principle of the church of Scotland, That no minister ought to be intruded into any parish

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admirably adapted to support that constitution in its purity and vigour, was both proposed and urged by her most zealous friends, who earnestly wished to see her prosperity. But infatuation seized the most part, while worldly ambition stirred up, and animated others to oppose it. An opportunity once lost, is not easily recovered; and scarce ever with the same advantage, with which it might have been used at the proper season.

parish contrary to the will of the congregation. The first book of discipline, c. 4. published A. D. 1560, declares, the lawful calling to the ministry to consist in the election of the people, the examination of the ministry, and admission by both; and that no pastor should be intruded upon any particular kirk without their consent. . And the second book of discipline declares, c. 12. that the people's liberty of choosing church-officers continued till the church was corrupted by Antichrist; that patronage flowed from the pope's canon-law, and is inconsistent with the order prescribed in God's word.

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IN the year 1732, several eminent ministers of the church of Scotland (forty-two in number) joined in an address to the General Assembly; representing, in a variety of striking instances, the growing defection of the judicatories of the church; and earnestly seeking a redress of these grievances, and a judicial assertion of divine truth in opposition to Prof. Simpson's fundamental errors. This representation, though just in itself, and couched in the most decent and respectful terms, was refused so much as a hearing. Whereupon such of these ministers as were present, offered a protest for their own exoneration, which was also refused to be marked. A petition of the same nature, signed by many hundreds of elders, and Christian people, was presented to the same assembly,



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assembly, and shared the same fate. Nor did that assembly stop here, but proceeded to break down the first, the foremost barriers of ecclesiastic liberty, by summarily decreeing, that the decisive power of electing ministers for the supply of vacant congregations, (where an accepted presentation did not take place), is competent only to a conjunct meeting of heritors and elders; requiring no other qualification of these heritors, but that they be Protestants; which it is plain they may nominally be, and yet very much disaffected to the government, both in church and state. The passing of this act occasioned deep concern to liberal and thinking minds in every corner of Scotland, and was peculiarly afflicting to several truly zealous ministers present in the assembly, who bore

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a faithful and courageous testimony against it, as incompatible with the received principles, and constitution of the church of Scotland.

THE first thing in that decision they complained of, was, the injurious treatment it gives to a vast number of individuals in the church, who happen (through no fault or misconduct of theirs) to possess no property sufficient to constitute them heritors in the parish where they reside, and who were never called to the office of elders: all these, who upon an average may perhaps be as twenty to one in the different parishes of Scotland, are by one stroke of church-authority, divested of their natural privilege of chusing the man to be their pastor, who seems in their judgment to possess gifts best adapted to

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to their edification and improvement.

THIS usage of the Christian \* people, whose benefit is supposed to be the only object of a gospel-mi-

\* For we unanimously agree with a late writer that " these, ignorant of the fundamental truths of Christianity; these, scandalous, profane, deniers of the divine original of the Old and New Testament, or of any truth therein plainly revealed; these, neglecters of the public, private, and secret worship of God: these, given to cursing, swearing, Sabbath profanation, drunkenness, whoredom, or other scandalous courses, are destitute of capacity and right to chuse a gospel-minister. The ignorant are utterly incapable to judge, of either the preacher's matter or method. The openly wicked have their hatred of Christ and a faithful minister marked in their forehead; neither appear visible members of the Christian church. To admit them therefore, to chuse a Christian pastor, would be a method, introducing ruin and woe; a method equally absurd, as for unfree men to chuse the magistrates of a burgh: rather, equally absurd, as if ignorant babes, and our enemies the French, should be sustained electors of our members of parliament, and privy council."

nistry,

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nistry, is so absurd, that it is scarce possible to be serious upon it, without giving things their proper names, which must be disgusting: and to lash them with becoming severity in the more gentle poignant phrase of satire, is at present unreasonable. Let it suffice to observe, that all voluntary agreements, that constitute new relations, are, in the eye of law and reason, supposed to be formed and conducted by mutual consent of the parties related. And unless some peculiar title to an absolute power in the church, could be produced, in favours of heritors and elders, it can be no injury to their superior station, to refuse the competency of their authority and right, to establish a relation between a minister and a reclaiming people.

To



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To inquire what right they, or the patron, may have to dispose of the stipend, manse, and glebe, is no part of my design: but only to observe, that a title in law to all these temporalities, lays no obligation on the conscience of the numerous individuals in a parish, where such stipend, manse, and glebe, are allocated to a minister intruded on the possession of them without the consent of the people, to own and submit to the said incumbent's ministry, upon the high pain of being declared schismatics, &c. Schismatics they can with no justice or propriety be stiled. And the reason is obvious and striking: the consent necessary to constitute this mutual relation between pastor and people was neither asked nor obtained; and even their disapprobation and dissent, when entered, was not regarded.

Shall

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Shall a patient be allowed to chuse his phyfician? or one that has bufinefs at the bar the right of chufing his lawyer? And fhall not the claim of a Chriftian congregation, to chufe the minifter they can with moft pleafure and apparent advantage fubmit to, be allowed, by equal judges, to be every way as reafonable and valid?

MOREOVER, it was alledged, that this method of planting vacant congregations betrays a manifefit contempt of the true honour and intereft of the church. Free inquiry among the people, and the exercife of a judgment of difcretion, was the fource, muft be the fupport, and will be coeval with our civil and religious liberties. If our reformation be the diftinguifhing glory, and the real intereft of Britain, let

The P R E F A C E. xlix

let us never be so basely ungrateful as to forget, despise, or even treat with a cold indifference, the only mean under God of this most important and inestimable blessing. It seems truly astonishing, that men of ability and discernment, who are by office bound to maintain our sacred privileges, should tamely yield them up, so far as to put it in the power of a few, to react that very part which both by church and state, was found to be an intolerable grievance at the Revolution and Reformation. It is true, Popery and Prelacy were the evils then complained of, but we must remember they were complained of, chiefly because they were managed in a way that struck at that liberty, which includes every thing dear to us as men, and as Christians. And I suppose none will dispute whether op-

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pression

## I The P R E F A C E.

pression and violent measures are most odious and hateful, when employed in support of an unscriptural constitution, or in managing an interest that is scriptural and divine, and abhors every such method of defence.

FINALLY, it was affirmed, that the measures agreed to by that assembly, were directly opposite to the revealed will of God, the only criterion of truth, the only standard of excellence and conduct. And indeed what can be more evident from the practice and example of the apostles, than that it is the province, not of heritors and elders exclusively, but of the church-members, to elect and nominate her own officers? Acts i. 15. and vi. 3. This argument was set in the most clear and advantageous light,  
by



## The P R E F A C E. II

by several writers at that time; particularly by the Reverend Mr Wilson of Perth, in the preface to his sermon, *Stedfastness in the faith*; and by the Reverend Mr Currie, in some of his writings.

IT was with the utmost concern, that the zealous friends of the church of Scotland, considered as a Christian church built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, looked on the nature, and tendency of these proceedings. They bewailed them, both in public and in private; and generously employed their whole strength in repeated efforts to rescue the principles of the constitution from impending destruction. They clearly foresaw how that unconstitutional scheme, which was so evidently framed

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lii      The P R E F A C E.

med to oppress Christians in lower stations of life, must create a dislike, if not a contempt of the judicatories of the church; must open the door of access to the ministry only to those who had interest with men of fortune and influence and shut it against all others, however worthy; must either supersede the established forms of the constitution, in licensing and ordaining ministers, or involve both judicatories and candidate in the grossest absurdities and contradictions, not to say perjury itself; while questions are gravely and solemnly asked by, and answers returned to a court constitute in the name of Christ, and professing to act in the immediate view of a future judgment, which, on both sides, are well known to be so widely distant from facts. And, in a word, they foresaw, how, upon

on

## The P R E F A C E. Jiii

on the present authorised plan, every attempt to act upon the constitutional laws, which had been established at the Revolution, would be rendered fruitless and unsuccessful \*.

MR EBENEZER ERSKINE, minister at Stirling, was one of these who distinguished himself by opposing with great spirit these measures in

\* All the ecclesiastical forms and steps of procedure, in settling a minister according to the Presbyterian constitution, which received the sanction of civil authority at the Revolution, plainly suppose, nay, expressly declare, that the minister to be settled is the free choice of the people in the parish for whose benefit, comfort, and instruction, he is intended. And these forms, though quite inconsistent with the present method of settlement in virtue of the law of patronages, and the act of assembly 1732, are still kept up, and gone through on every occasion; particularly a call must be moderated, as the phrase is, and sustained by the presbytery before the settlement proceed. But to

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in the assembly 1732. And being at that very time, moderator of the synod of Perth and Stirling, he opened the synod at Perth, October 10. 1732, with a sermon from Psal. cxviii. 22. "The stone which the builders rejected, is become the head-stone of the corner."

ON this public occasion, Mr Erskine attacked some of the most prevalent courses of defection in the church; particularly the act of the preceding assembly, and

denominate a paper subscribed perhaps only by an exciseman, or the patron's factor, or a few non-residing heritors, or even by a majority of the heritors and elders, a call, when all the heads of families in the parish have entered their disapprobation and dissent, nay, declared their aversion and dislike to the candidate or person nominated, is surely a strange abuse of language; and to find it a call, and sustain it as such, is surely a shocking abuse of judicial power: and yet instances of each of the above-cases daily occur.

the



The P R E F A C E.    iv

the proceedings of judicatories in the settlement of ministers over reclaiming and dissenting congregations, with the spirit becoming a faithful minister of Christ, and true friend to the interest of his members. His zeal for supporting the constitution of the established Presbyterian church of Scotland in its purity and vigour; together with his warm remonstrances against the violent, unscriptural measures carrying on by a party in the judicatories, had exposed him so much to their resentment, that at the second diet of that synod, they entered a formal complaint against him, for uttering many offensive expressions in his discourse before the synod. And though many eminent members of the synod, in direct opposition to this charge, declared in open court, that they had heard Mr Erskine deliver  
nothing

## lvi The P R E F A C E.

nothing but sound, pertinent, and seasonable doctrine; yet his accusers still strenuously insisting on their general complaint, they at length obtained of the synod an appointment of a committee, to recollect the particulars in the sermon alleged to be offensive, and to lay them before the synod in writing at their next diet. This was accordingly done, and answers given to each of them by Mr Erskine \*.

“ AFTER

\* Mr Erskine immediately afterwards published the sermon itself, for the satisfaction of the public; and in a short preface prefixed to it, he apologizes for himself thus: “ If any think, upon reading of “ the following discourse, that there is too great “ freedom used with respect to the present steps of “ defection; let them remember, that there is now “ no other way left to bear testimony against such “ things, but by warning the world against them “ from press or pulpit; representations and petitions from ministers or church-members at the “ bar, being utterly disregarded, and no access to “ enter

## The P R E F A C E. lvii

“ AFTER three days warm reasoning on this affair, the synod did, by the small majority of six voices,

“ enter any protest or dissent against these proceedings in the public records, for the exoneration of conscience, or the information of our posterity, that such things did not pass in our day, without a struggle and testimony against them.”

There appears to me but two ways in which a remonstrance against any unconstitutional method introduced into a church can be properly conducted. Either it must be presented to the ecclesiastical judicatories; or it must be exhibited as a plea, a warning, and caution to the people. The latter is not to be pursued, till the former has been tried and found unsuccessful. Now, the assembly 1730, in order to cut down all standing testimonies against their proceedings, however irregular or unscriptural they might be, had discharged the marking of any protest or dissent in their minutes. And accordingly the several remonstrances presented to the assembly 1732, were all rejected without a hearing. It is plain then, that Mr Erskine was shut up, and forced to the measure he took, of addressing his plea to the judgment and conscience of his hearers and readers. I am aware, that it may be objected against this way of managing a remonstrance against the decisions of a supreme judicatory,

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“ voices, find Mr Erskine censurable, for the expressions contained in the process, and which they  
“ alledged

ry, that it is low and injudicious, a catching at personal applause, and hazarding the peace of the church. But it is hoped, none will impugn it by such arguments with too much confidence, till they have duly weighed the following considerations. It highly concerns every Protestant Presbyterian, and Revolutionist, to reconcile the necessary measures for attaining and preserving all that is dear and sacred to us in these important and honourable characters, with the objection. It will also be proper, that such objectors duly consider, what is the grand design of all church-authority, the edification of the body; and whether an apprehension of danger to the body, does not call forth every member to provide, in the most effectual manner, for the interest of the whole; and the rather so, as his own dearest interest is at stake along with that of the public; for “if one member suffer, all the members “suffer with it.” Moreover, I must beg leave to call the attention of these objectors to the manner in which the Lord Jesus Christ himself, when on earth, and his disciples after his ascension, managed their testimony, whether it was not by a plea addressed to the people, other means being denied them: and, finally, whether this method of remonstrating



## The P R E F A C E.    lix

“alleged were emitted by him,  
“in his sermon at the opening of  
“the said synod. Against which  
“sentence he protested, and ap-  
“pealed to the next General As-  
“sembly.

“WHEN the assembly met at  
“Edinburgh in May 1733, they  
“approved of the proceedings of  
“the synod of Perth and Stirling;

monstrating being neglected, and no other way left open, the consequence of keeping silence at such a critical time, to the interest of the public, be apparently great. Experience has rendered it undeniably evident, that the apprehensions entertained by Mr Erskine about the tendency of these illiberal and unconstitutional measures against which he testified, were far from being chimerical or ill founded. In the course of 34 years, events have occurred, that were scarcely to be imagined; and all the disadvantage the public has sustained from the warnings given them, is, that their surprise has been in some measure abated: and if that be a crime, an honourable assembly of prophets and apostles must be voted offenders along with the seceding ministers.

“and

## IN The P R E F A C E.

“ and appointed Mr Erskine to be  
“ rebuked and admonished by the  
“ Moderator at their own bar;  
“ which was accordingly done:  
“ whereupon Mr Erskine protested,  
“ that in regard the assembly had  
“ found him censurable, and had  
“ tendered a rebuke and admoni-  
“ tion to him, for things he con-  
“ ceived agreeable to, and founded  
“ upon the word of God, and our  
“ approved standards, therefore he  
“ shall be at liberty to preach the  
“ same truths, and testify against  
“ the same, or like evils, on all  
“ proper occasions. Unto which  
“ protestation and declaration, as  
“ containing a testimony against  
“ the act of the assembly 1732, and  
“ asserting their privilege and du-  
“ ty, to testify publicly against the  
“ same, or like defections, other  
“ three ministers gave in a written  
“ adherence,

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“ adherence, under form of instru-  
“ ment; and then all the four with-  
“ drew, not resolving to carry their  
“ testimony any farther; but to re-  
“ turn home to their charges, and  
“ act in conformity with their pro-  
“ testation, as Providence should  
“ give them opportunity: and pro-  
“ bably there never had been a Se-  
“ cession, if matters had sisted here.  
“ But the prevailing party were de-  
“ termined to screw church-author-  
“ rity to a far greater height; and  
“ accordingly, about eleven o'clock  
“ the same night, the four brethren  
“ were summoned by the assembly's  
“ officer, to compear at the bar of  
“ the general assembly to-morrow at  
“ ten o'clock before noon. When,  
“ in obedience to this citation, they  
“ came next day to the bar; with-  
“ out a question put to them, they  
“ were immediately ordered to re-  
f “ tire

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“ tire with a committee, who were  
“ instructed to deal with them about  
“ withdrawing their protest. This  
“ committee, after some time spent  
“ with them, returned and made  
“ report, “ That the four bre-  
“ thren continued firmly resolved to  
“ adhere to their protestation;” but  
“ without relating any of the rea-  
“ sons advanced by them in support  
“ of their resolution : whereupon the  
“ assembly, by a great majority, or-  
“ dained, That the said four bre-  
“ thren appear before the commis-  
“ sion in August next, and then  
“ shew their sorrow for their con-  
“ duct, in offering to protest against  
“ a sentence of the assembly, and  
“ retract the same : and in case they  
“ do not shew their sorrow for their  
“ conduct, and retract, as said is,  
“ the commission is impowered and  
“ appointed to suspend them from  
“ the



The P R E F A C E. lxiii

“ the exercise of their ministry: and,  
“ in case they act contrary to the  
“ said sentence of suspension, the  
“ commission in November is im-  
“ powered and appointed to proceed  
“ to a higher censure against them.”

“ As the commission in August,  
“ that year, passed the sentence of  
“ suspension, contrary to the mind  
“ of many of their members, se-  
“ verals of whom, both ministers  
“ and elders, dissented therefrom;  
“ so their proceeding in November  
“ ensuing, to a higher censure,  
“ was carried only by the Mode-  
“ rator, Mr John Goldie’s casting  
“ vote. Thereafter, the said com-  
“ mission came to their final sen-  
“ tence, which stands in their mi-  
“ nutes, in the following terms;  
“ -----“ The commission did, and  
“ hereby do, loose the relation of

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“ Mr Ebenezer Erskine, minister  
“ at Stirling, Mr William Wilfon,  
“ minister at Perth, Mr Alexander  
“ Moncrief, minister at Abernethy,  
“ and Mr James Fisher, minister  
“ [then] at Kinclaven, to their re-  
“ spective charges; and do declare  
“ them no longer ministers of this  
“ church: and do, hereby, pro-  
“ hibit all ministers of this church,  
“ to employ them, or any of them,  
“ in any ministerial function. And  
“ the commission do declare the  
“ churches of the said ministers va-  
“ cant, from, and after the date  
“ of this sentence \*.”

THIS

\* When this sentence was intimate to the four brethren, they protested their office, and their relation to their respective congregations, should be held as valid as if no such sentence had passed. And accordingly all of them cleaved to their congregations, and lived and died, with growing esteem and reputation, among them; except Mr Fisher, who, upon a call from the congregation of Glasgow,

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“ THIS arbitrary procedure laid  
“ the four brethren under the ne-  
“ cessity of declaring their Seces-  
“ sion, [not from the church of  
“ Scotland, but] from the prevail-  
“ ing party in the judicatories there-  
“ of, who had now cast them out  
“ from ministerial communion with  
“ them: and this their secession,  
“ given in, at that time, in wri-  
“ ting, under form of instrument,  
“ was chiefly founded upon the  
“ following grounds, namely, That  
“ the said prevailing party were  
“ carrying on a course of defection  
“ from our reformed principles;  
“ and particularly, were suppressing  
“ ministerial freedom and faith-  
“ fulness, in testifying against the  
“ present backslidings of the church,  
“ and inflicting censures upon mi-  
gow, was, some years after, regularly transport-  
ed by the Presbytery, where he still labours among  
a numerous people, with much acceptance.

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“ nisters, for witnessing by prote-  
“ stations and otherwise, against  
“ the same.

“ IT is true, the assembly which  
“ met in May 1734, did so far a-  
“ bate the rigour of the above sen-  
“ tence, that they impowered the  
“ fynod of Perth and Stirling to  
“ unite the four brethren to the  
“ communion of this church, and  
“ restore them to their respective  
“ ministerial charges; “ but, with  
“ this express direction, That the said  
“ fynod shall not take upon them  
“ to judge of the legality or for-  
“ mality of the former proceedings  
“ of the church-judicatories, in re-  
“ lation to this affair; or, either  
“ approve or censure the same.”  
“ Whereby it plainly appears, that  
“ the acts and sentences passed  
“ against the brethren, were legal  
and



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“ and formal still, notwithstanding  
“ ing of all that the assembly  
“ 1734 did; and must continue  
“ to be so, till some subsequent  
“ assembly shall think fit to re-  
“ verse and annul them, which is  
“ not likely to be done in our day:  
“ so that both preaching and pro-  
“ testing, against acts and deci-  
“ sions of assembly, (however bad),  
“ if once passed, are still, in the  
“ judgment of the prevailing party  
“ in the present judicatories, nei-  
“ ther due nor regular ministerial  
“ freedom, which any ministers  
“ of this church may use, with-  
“ out being liable to censure\*.”

IN this view of matters, the four ministers apprehended it to be their

\* This part of the narrative, I have extracted from the preface to the Reverend Mr Ralph Erskine's works, drawn by the Reverend Mr James Fisher, who was an eye-witness to the whole proceedings.

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bounden duty to stand forth in adhering to, and defending the constitution of the church of Scotland, as laid down in the standards of public authority therein; constantly affirming they were induced to this disagreeable, but necessary step, by the strongest conviction of the countenance given in scripture to the whole system of her principles, and by the obligation lying on their conscience, in virtue of their ordination-vows in that communion. Their situation and circumstances to be sure involved them in difficulties many and great: for if they hearkened to men, and kept a timid silence under all the indignities cast upon their avowed principles by the prevailing party in the present judicatories of the church, they could never satisfy their own consciences: and if they zealously acted up to  
their

The P R E F A C E. lxix

their light and obligations, they must expose themselves to the resentment of those in power. But, like true, patriotic sons of the church, resolving not only to risk, but to sacrifice all that was dear to them as men in this world, on a faithful discharge of their duty, they candidly represented the reasons of their conduct to the world. They were declared criminal for their generous and disinterested zeal, without so much as one attempt to convict them, either of error, vice, or neglect of duty, from the scriptures of truth, or the received constitutions of the church of Scotland.

THEREFORE, that they might regularly afford relief to such congregations as were oppressed with the violent intrusion of ministers, never chosen or called by them; and  
that

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that they might be able to support, in its purity and vigour, that ecclesiastic constitution, which, from the sacred oracles, is delineated in the Confession of faith, and Directory, composed by the Westminster Assembly, and which received the sanction of civil authority at the Revolution; they, with prayer and fasting, constitute themselves into an ecclesiastic court, which they denominated, *The Associate Presbytery*.

THIS sets before us the first, the original view of the Secession. And as the first of their decisions in a judicial capacity will be lasting and incontestible proofs of the singleness and uprightness of their zeal, in favour of our excellent Presbyterian constitution; so, with the utmost readiness, we obey the call given us to submit an account of the most essential



## The P R E F A C E. lxxi

essential and leading articles of our faith \*, to the judgment of the candid, intelligent, and impartial part  
of

\* When the first Christians were pointed out as men of the most abandoned character, and Christianity itself as an enemy to all order and government; it became a matter of indisputable duty to wipe off these reproaches, by giving to the world an impartial account of their doctrines and conduct.

At the Reformation, the Papist acted just as the Heathen had done; the same irreconcilable enmity to the truth, inspiring both with rage and falsehood; which made not only particular persons, but the reformed churches in their respective bodies, give an authentic account of the sentiments they maintained, the springs whence the Reformation flowed, and the purposes it aimed at; to convince the world, that when they disclaimed the authority of the church of Rome, despised her censures, and stood unawed by the thunders of the Vatican, they were not moved by an aversion to discipline, a spirit of sedition, nor a love of unrestrained pleasures, but by a just regard to the honour of God, and the interests of true religion.

The abuse thrown out against the Seceders, both in the last and in the preceding assembly, when debating on the subject of the schism-overture,

## lxxii The P R E F A C E.

of mankind; declaring, at the same time, that we will thankfully receive such improving hints, offered with

a

is so exact a transcript of the unthinking, uncandid, and abusive language, employed to support the cause of Rome, against all that refuse implicit obedience to their decisions, and by their kindred brethren, the high-church bigots in our neighbour nations against the dissenters, that one may venture to affirm, without diffidence or hesitation, that one and the same temper reigns through the whole and every part. However, that calumny and slander in that unmanly, indecent, and presumptuous manner, may blush, and be confounded for once, I shall take leave to present the reader with an abstract of the charge exhibited against the seceding ministers by one Rev. Gentleman, in a very long declamatory speech, which he had prepared for the occasion. As to the seceding ministers, he said, they were a set of ignorant, illiterate, and ill-designing men, who nursed up the people under their inspection in ignorance, error, vice, and enthusiasm. He affirmed, that their chief aim and employ, in their public ministrations, was to divert the attention of their people from the essentials of religion, and fix it to idle and unprofitable controversies; that they made it their business to teach and  
excite

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a friendly intention, as shall tend to detect undesigned mistakes, or do more justice to truth.

To

excite their people to hate one another, and to hate the church of Scotland.

As I happened to be an ear-witness to all this declamation, I wrote immediately to the orator himself, that I had long cultivated an intimate acquaintance with the seceding ministers, and had ever taken them to be, in every respect, the very reverse of his description of them; and therefore would be glad to know, whether the violent accusations which he had uttered against them, with such an air of real persuasion, were his fixed and deliberate sentiments concerning them; and concluded with observing to him, that his averments behoved to be either well or ill founded. If well founded, then I apprehended, that a regard to the public welfare, and compassion to the great numbers of unhappy individuals, who were thus miserably misled and abused by them, called loudly upon him clearly to state to the world, and to them, the facts by which they stood supported. If they were ill founded, then I apprehended that he had done a very high injury to the characters of these gentlemen, by defaming and traducing them in so very open and public a manner, before so many noble and honourable persons, in a place where he knew they had no liberty to answer for themselves, and wipe off

## Lxxiv The P R E F A C E.

To be large in an enumeration of particulars, wherein Christians as such are agreed, is altogether unnecessary,

the aspersions cast on them. To this letter, though dated and subscribed, I have never received any answer. Nor have I heard of his conveying any abstract of the evidence, in support of his charge, to the public. But as the seceding ministers were, on that public occasion, most injuriously represented; I have embraced this opportunity of doing them justice against the calumnies, which a restless faction does not cease to propagate. That the Seceders compose a body of as judicious, honest, sober, industrious, and useful members of society; of as quiet, peaceable, and friendly neighbours in town and country; of as true friends to religious and civil liberty, upon the principles of the Revolution in 1688; of as strenuous adherents to the Protestant acts of settlement, and as sincerely and affectionately loyal subjects to his present Majesty, and his illustrious royal family, as are to be found in this country at present, is a fact too notorious to be denied. And therefore the chief design of the following display of the sentiments, spirit, and manner of the Seceders, is to shew, that they maintain the strongest attachment to the established Presbyterian church of Scotland; and that the very same zealous regard to the scheme of doctrines, the order of worship, and form of ecclesiastical government,



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cessary, and would at present answer no valuable end. All that is

ment, contained in the Confession of faith, and directory of that church, which influenced them to state a secession from the corrupt majority in her judicatories, will also induce them with readiness, pleasure, and complacency, to return to communion with them, so soon (which may God be pleased to hasten) as they shall discover a conviction of the errors of their present administration, and shew a disposition to act up to the true spirit and plan upon which our church is formed. How unjust then must it be to charge the seceding ministers with making a schism in the church; and to reproach them with the abusive name of schismatics! How ignorant do such shew themselves to be of the scripture notion of schism! Schism, in the scripture-sense of the word, says a late learned divine, is, when the members of a particular organical church put a difference amongst their faithful ministers and teachers, who are holding the same testimony of Jesus. The great Rutherford says, "When the greatest part of a church maketh defection from the truth, the lesser part remaining sound, the greatest part is the church of separatists. Though the manifest and greatest part, in the actual exercise of discipline be the church; yet in the case of right discipline, the best, though fewest, is the church."

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requisite, is only a succinct detail of some capital articles, that lead us to the conclusions, and direct us to the measures which expose the Secession to the unjust imputation of maintaining novel and untenable peculiarities; and which, in some respects, characterize the body.

THE honourable sentiments we entertain of the word of revelation, as an infallible oracle, together with the strong conviction we have of the blindness, stupidity, and carnality of the human mind, in its present fallen state, induce us to think, and invariably to teach, That the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament, are the only criterion of truth, the only rule to direct us, how we may glorify and enjoy God, our supreme, our eternal good. To the decision of this unerring standard

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standard we inviolably adhere in every question relative to human conduct towards God or man: and believe that “ the supreme Judge,  
“ by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and  
“ all decrees of councils, opinions of  
“ ancient writers, doctrines of men,  
“ and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence  
“ we are to rest, can be no other  
“ but the holy Spirit speaking in the  
“ scriptures.” *Confess. of faith,*  
*chap. 1. sect. 10.*

THOUGH we readily grant, and are fully persuaded, that every scriptural institution is eminently conducive to the spiritual and eternal welfare of those who shall embrace it; we dare not be so complaisant as to admit, that any ecclesiastic constitution is therefore excellent, because it is supposed

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to have such a tendency: this we consider as too vague a criterion; and what seems moreover to derogate highly from the complete sufficiency of the scripture-revelation; while it furnishes a plausible pretence for scheming men to introduce into the church whatever innovations they may apprehend calculated to promote her good and advantage. And it might easily be made appear, that the man of sin made considerable advances on the strength of this very maxim.

As a natural and inseparable consequent from all this, we dare not call any man, or body of men, father, nor submit to their judgment, without clear and convincing evidence from the word of God. We believe most firmly, that no man is Lord of our conscience, and  
that



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that all the province competent to the servants of Christ is to promote the edification, and help the joy of the church, by these rules particular and general\*, which the Lord Jesus himself hath already appointed, and proclaimed in his word. This view of things engages our serious attention, in supporting the right, and exhorting to the use of private judgment formed upon personal enquiry; being fully assured that no religious service can be truly reasonable in our performance of it, unless it be judicious.

THOUGH it is always a great uneasiness to a liberal mind, whenever he finds himself reduced to the necessity of standing against great, good, and learned men; yet the

\* Confession, Cap. I. § 6.

obligations

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obligations we are under to believe and act in single conformity to the declared will of God, constrain us to set aside every authority, that would supplant or claim equal honour, with that of the great God who cannot lie.

WE are fully satisfied, that the standards of public authority in the church of Scotland, exhibit a just and consistent view of the design and meaning of the holy scriptures concerning doctrine, worship, discipline, and government; and viewing them in this light, we are careful to regard them, not merely as articles of peace, but as terms of union and fellowship. To say that we adhere to the scriptures, as the only test of truth, is too equivocal to be sustained a proper evidence that we are of one mind, so far as to unite in church-fellowship, with  
any

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any prospect of success or comfort; while avowed Socinians, Arians, Arminians, &c. will cheerfully agree to this confession, as well as Calvinists. And reason itself tells us, that it is not a man's words, but his sentiments, that ought to be considered as his principles.

WE believe that the government appointed in the church is but one, and does not depend on the political interests, or capricious humours of men. Far be it from us to unchurch, or denude of the Christian character, those that are otherwise minded on this point, and at the same time hold, and inviolably adhere to those sublime and glorious doctrines which distinguish Christianity, and make it most eminently to differ from every other form of religion professed or known  
in

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in the world, and who observe those methods of worship prescribed in scripture: but we must follow and associate with others, only so far as they seem "to observe all things whatsoever Christ hath commanded his disciples." And whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, and mind the same things.

WHATEVER is peculiar in our sentiments on some points of gospel-doctrine, connected with a book, intitled, *The Marrow of modern Divinity*, is justly stated, and, we apprehend, solidly supported, in many excellent writings, both of our own and foreign divines. Among others, the celebrated Witſius has employed his pen successfully in this noble cause, in his treatise *de œconomia fœderum*, and especially in



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in his *Animadversiones irenice*; the ingenious Mr Hervey \*, in his *The-ron and Aspasio*; the judicious Mr Boston, in his notes on the *Marrow*, and *View of the Covenant of Grace*; the worthy author of a book universally ascribed to an eminent minister of the church of Scotland still alive, bearing this title, *A sober inquiry*, &c. published 1723; and a

\* Mr Hervey, in a letter to one of his correspondents, says, "I found it necessary to make  
" these two additions, in order to maintain two  
" very important points, which are opposed by  
" many even of my pious friends, I mean the as-  
" surance, or special application and appropriating  
" persuasion included in the faith of the operation  
" of God; and that sinners, as sinners, without  
" the preparative or condition of any good qualifi-  
" cations, are allowed, are warranted thus to ap-  
" ply Christ to themselves, by virtue of the free  
" offer and grant made in the gospel. These two  
" doctrines seem to me the very quintessence of  
" grace; and the riches of the gospel. They are,  
" I am very certain, the sovereign consolation of  
" my own soul, at least they are the channel and  
" conveyance of all comfort to my heart."

later

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later performance, bearing this title, *Act concerning the doctrine of grace, &c.* by the Associate Presbytery. Beside many others, these named may serve to lead any unbiaſſed attentive reader of them, into juſt notions of our meaning on the ſeveral points of doctrine, that are ſuppoſed to be ſingular or dangerous. And to ſatisfy any ſcrupulous mind about our views of goſpel-holineſs, its nature, neceſſity, and excellency, it may ſuffice to obſerve, that we adopt, in the obvious, unforced meaning of the words, all that is delivered on this head in the *Larger Catechiſm*, Q. 91. to the cloſe, and in the ſecond part of the *Marrow of modern Divinity*.

WE lay it down as a principle, agreeable to the laws both of God and nature, that where God does  
not

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not interpose to point out the teachers, in any Christian congregation, by inspiration, there is no person or persons, either in the church, or state, who have any rightful power, derived either from reason, or scripture, to impose an overseer, or minister on any assembly of Christians whatsoever, without their own consent; for it is they themselves who must give an account for their own souls to God; and therefore they must have a right to chuse the persons who shall watch for their spiritual welfare, shew unto them the way of salvation, and instruct them in their duty.

WHEN encroachments, prejudicial to the liberty of God's heritage \*, are made by ecclesiastic ru-

\* Acts vi. 3.

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lers on their unalienable rights, it becomes the injured to resent with decency, and in the spirit of Christianity, the insult offered to the authority of their glorious Head, and to assert their claim to every privilege, secured for them in the charter of divine revelation. If the injury complained of shall not be remedied upon a regular application, and cannot be submitted to, without endangering Christian liberty, gospel-purity, and a good conscience, it seems most reasonable to resist the first appearances of oppression, by casting off the yoke that cannot be broken. Unless our forefathers had been inspired with these lively, generous sentiments of liberty, we had to this day been groaning under the cruel bondage of ignorance and slavery. We take it to be a maxim which  
no



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no Christian will refuse to own, as soon as it is proposed, that a church founded on Christian principles, must always be friendly to civil liberty, which stands connected with it by the strictest ties: and therefore cannot help wondering, that the judicatories of the church of Scotland should adopt and pursue measures that seem to say in the heart of by-standers, that ecclesiastical tyranny, oppression, and slavery, will befriend, or even consist with our civil liberty.

WE believe it is the indispensable duty of all Christians without distinction, to love all that bear the image of Christ, and walk in obedience to his law: we consider Christian affection as a service due from every man to his brother in Christ. Our daily prayer is, "Grace  
h. 2 " be.

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“ be with all that love our Lord  
“ Jesus Christ in sincerity.” Our  
constant exhortation is to walk in  
love, to do good, and to follow  
peace with all men, especially with  
them that are of the household of  
faith. We cannot indeed think it  
scriptural, orderly, or even rational,  
to join in the administration or  
receiving of the sacraments, where  
it is not within the compass of our  
power to purge out the old leaven,  
by the regular exercise of that discipline  
Christ hath appointed to be  
used in his house \*. But this sets  
no bounds to our loving as brethren,  
those that are not of our sentiments  
and communion.

WE reflect with delight and gratitude,  
on the marvellous deliverances  
which God has been pleased

\* 1 Cor. v.

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to work for these lands; and on the apostolic piety and resolution which animated our reformers, who, after securing in some measure, the doctrines of religion as of the first and greatest importance, turned their attention next to the government of the church, which under the Papacy had become a system of worldly power and interest; and, instead of promoting and advancing religion, tended to excite and strengthen some of the worst passions in the human mind. A plan for the worship and government of the church was accordingly drawn up, not merely in conformity to the church at Geneva, but such a plan as to our pious ancestors appeared most agreeable to the mind of God in scripture, and the practice of the primitive church.

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As the friends of Rome strained every nerve against the reformation, and endeavoured by every method that power and cunning could suggest, to recover the interest they visibly perceived was daily declining, prudence, common to every society, directed our reformers to go forth by the footsteps of the flock, in solemnly owning, in the presence of the great God, the doctrines which they believed to be contained in the holy scriptures; and in the same open solemn manner, expressed their dislike of every thing in the Popish system, that was inconsistent with that only rule and reason of truth and duty. This was done at first by a part of the nation, and afterwards, as the reformation prevailed, this solemn obligation became proportionably more universal, and obtained the name of  
the



The P R E F A C E. xci.  
the *National Covenant of Scotland.*

WHEN many of all ranks of men, in England and Ireland, about the year 1640, came into the views of the church of Scotland, concerning the scheme of doctrine, and form of worship and government espoused by her at the Reformation, it was proposed to endeavour an uniformity in their system. The accomplishing of this design, though equally honourable and beneficial to all the three kingdoms, it was foreseen, would be violently opposed by some; and that much courage, care, watchfulness, and constancy, would be requisite to animate the authors and abettors of it, as well as to fortify their minds against the various difficulties and temptations that might occur in the execution of it. Therefore  
the

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the same prudent zeal \* that directed our reformers in Scotland in entering into the national covenant,

\* When I speak of a prudent zeal, I do not consider prudence as the same thing either with absolute indifference, or political wisdom; for I take prudence, when consistent with the scriptures, to be a conscientious attachment to God and man, according to present circumstances. And the light of nature, the example of our Lord and his apostles, and the very reason of things, support us in observing, that the work of covenanting should be managed in a way that will most openly and effectually support the purity and honour of the present truth, which is the word of Christ's patience. And the general rules of the word demonstrate, that no solemnity is too great, no zeal too ardent, on such important occasions, as demand openness, establishment, and satisfaction to others, in our steady attachment to, and appearance for the truth.

That many things are moral, which are only to be practised on particular occasions, is a position that will admit of the clearest and fullest proof. The characteristics of morality that mark such duties are the following. (1.) The occasions are common and usual among men. (2.) Supreme love to God, and unfeigned affection to men, point out

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nant, now directed great numbers of every rank, in 1643, to enter into a solemn oath, stedfastly to abide by the principles of our reformation, and to exert themselves to the uttermost of their power, by all fair, honest, and gospel-methods, to do

out the measures to be taken and pursued in these cases, and on these occasions. (3.) The man that would pursue other measures in these circumstances, and on these particular occasions, would act in contradiction to the obligations lying on him to glorify God, and do good to men, by either neglecting what is expedient, or doing what is unbecoming. Where these ingredients concur, though it should be only in seven, ten, or seventy, or seven hundred years, I would call the obligation a moral law; and the performance a moral duty. Even in this sense, I humbly think, we may consider covenanting as a duty moral in its nature and obligation. With regard to the manner of proceeding in that duty, it should certainly be so managed, as not to seem openly subservient to a party interest, because the true design thereof is to promote the ends of pure and undefiled religion among Christians considered not as distinguished by this or that peculiarity, but as persons that call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

each

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each what was lawful, suitable, and competent to them, according to their different spheres, abilities, and opportunities, for attaining so noble and important an end. This engagement is well known by the name of the *Solemn League and Covenant*. We can conceive no objection to lie against this laudable practice of our worthy ancestors, except what may arise from the articles of their engagement; because we find the method itself adopted and used in every society of any consequence, where we see them initiating men to places of trust, and securing their interest and fidelity by like solemnities. It is not proper here to enter into a detail of the several articles contained in this famous league, although we are bold to say, and we will say it loudly, will say it to the whole world, that

no.



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no member of the established Presbyterian church of Scotland can censure, condemn, or treat with ridicule and contempt, any one of them, without throwing equal reflection on her formula 1711. We believe the articles in these covenants are scriptural, that they spring from, are agreeable to, and founded on the revealed will of God, the only criterion of truth, the only standard of excellence; and therefore antecedently binding on every man's conscience: this we consider as their highest, and indeed their proper authority; while, at the same time, we believe that it will be a grievous aggravation of our insensibility, ingratitude, and apostasy, to embrace or espouse the errors, to indulge or practise the vices therein particularly renounced, or to give up with any part of the truth, and neglect  
any

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any of the duties therein avouched,  
after such discoveries and engagements as are almost universally known to have obtained in the days of our fathers, Ezra ix. 14. For  
“ although it is impossible that our  
“ obligation to moral duty can be  
“ increased by any deed of ours,  
“ beyond what it is already by the  
“ law of God, which is of the highest  
“ authority; yet, by reason of our  
“ own voluntary and superadded  
“ engagement, this obligation from  
“ the law may make a deeper impression than before; and our sin receive  
“ an higher aggravation, if we either omit the duty engaged unto, or commit the evil opposite  
“ to it \*.”

To open the reason and foundation of our sentiments on the several

\* Synod's catechism, Part 2. pag. 84. Quest. 64.  
heads

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heads of faith and practice, would exceed all reasonable bounds. And moreover, it would be quite unnecessary, as they are fully and distinctly opened in a book published several years ago, by common consent, intitled, *The Assembly's Shorter Catechism explained, by way of question and answer*, in two volumes. As this book has undergone three very large impressions, it must be in the hands of many, and we leave it to speak for itself.

ACCORDING to these principles, so we walk, and so we teach; and however some may call the whole a fruit of ignorance, a friend to vice, an erroneous, wild, and enthusiastic system; we have not so learned Christ as to make returns unkind, but will rather pray, "Father, forgive them, as it seems profitable"

i

" bable

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“ bable they know neither what  
“ they say, nor whereof they af-  
“ firm.” We adore the providence  
that is exhibiting a new call to lay  
before the world, the whole man-  
ner of our doctrine and conversa-  
tion; nor does any shame or fear  
about the goodness of our cause  
forbid us to submit an explicit  
account of the reason of the hope  
that is in us to the public: we  
know well who hath said, “ Ven-  
“ geance is mine,” and can patiently  
wait on his time of retribution.

THE striking difference between  
that genuine strictness in religion  
which we teach and inculcate, from  
the law of God, and the example  
of Christ, and that spurious strict-  
ness in religion, which is often mis-  
taken for the other, not only by  
the world, but by the parties them-  
selves,



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selfes, is most clearly opened, displayed, and enforced by our author, in a short description of the true notion of strictness, with which I shall beg leave to conclude this preface. It is the substance of a sermon he preached some years before his death, on that subject, to his own people, and was composed like the rest of the following essays, without any view to the press; and therefore cannot be liable to any suspicion of having been adapted to the design of the present publication.

**T**HE strict Christian is a person who places not his religion in a rigid censuring of others; nor in an eager attachment to the customs or opinions of a particular party; but is influenced in the whole of his conduct by an inflexible regard to  
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c    The   P R E F A C E.

the divine law, as the only rule of his life; and by a careful attention to the example of Jesus Christ, as the great pattern of his obedience. He reckons it not sufficient to distinguish himself from the many that walk in the broad way, by entertaining better notions, and more exalted sentiments than they; but his life is orthodox as his faith, and his conversation as his tongue. He is afraid to engage in whatsoever course of action, without being first at all due pains to satisfy his conscience, that it is well-pleasing unto God, or at least not prohibited in the law. But when he discerns the stamp of God's authority on any precept; though the world should countermand, he knows his own Master, and obeys God rather than man. It is true, he abhors those foolish and cruel macerations of the body, which  
some

## The P R E F A C E. ci

some superstitious bigots have mistaken for true mortification: for he knows that his body, being a temple of the Holy Ghost, deserves to be honoured, by keeping it in repair; and being the servant of his soul, should be mercifully used, as the good man is merciful to his very beast. But at the same time he takes care not to pamper the flesh too much, and make provision for its lusts, under the specious pretence of using his Christian liberty. For though he stands fast in this liberty, and will not be brought into bondage by any; he chuses not to be walking always upon its utmost verge or border. Some things that are in themselves lawful, he judges not expedient, on account of the attending circumstances; and abstains from them accordingly. The regard he bears to the law of his God,

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is uniform, equal, and consistent. He is no less conscientious in performing relative duties, than in practising those that are immediately religious. He abhors their impiety, who make the divine commands to clash, and break the one table of the law against the other: who, under pretence of devotion, forget natural affection; as if one should devote unto sacred uses what is necessary for supporting the life of his nearest relations, and say, "It is a gift by what-soever thou might have been provided by me." Though he is strict in observing every the least commandment, it is not that he may indulge himself in neglecting the weightier matters of the law; but rather to demonstrate unto all beholders, that if the authority of the great Lawgiver is to be so much respected, even in the smallest things; much



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much more in those weighty and important matters that are the very soul of religion. He equally detests the spurious strictness of the Pharisee, which was only partial and hypocritical; and the profane looseness of the multitude, who walk at random, and seem to think, that it is scarce possible to go wrong in the way that leadeth unto life. He neither shuns nor courts the approbation of the world, and studies rather not to deserve than to avoid their reproaches. His heart being reconciled unto the spirituality and holiness of the law, his liberty and freedom is not in the least impaired by the strict rules he has imposed upon himself; he walks at liberty, because he seeks thy precepts, O God. Some there are who esteem him to be no better than a nice and precise fool, and an affect-

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civ    The   P R E F A C E.

er of singularity ; but he endeavours, by joining to his strictness a sweet and obliging behaviour, to confute this calumny, and oftentimes he increaseth, like his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in favour with God and man. He looks upon all his strictness as too little ; and coming not only exceeding short of what is required in the law, but of what others have arrived at : and he renounces it all in point of trust and confidence. It is not his own strictness, but his Saviour's atonement, on which he builds his hopes of a happy eternity. Go on, O happy soul ; though thy companions should be few in the narrow way that leadeth unto everlasting life : in a little thou shalt no more complain of being solitary ; for thou shalt come to the innumerable company of angels ; to the general assembly and church of  
the

## The P R E F A C E. cv

the first-born, whose names are written in heaven; where the strictest Christian shall receive the most glorious crown. For their shame, they shall be advanced to double honour; and for confusion, they shall rejoice in their eternal portion.

IT now remains, to beg the reader's excuse, for detaining him so long from a perusal of the more important and interesting contents of the following volumes; and to express my ardent desire, that, blessed by a gracious Providence, they may gain the haven of public acceptance, and import these most valuable commodities; pleasure which improves, and improvement which delights.

J. P.





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*On the great evil of sin.*

**O** SIN, thou only evil in which there is no good, thou superfluity of naughtiness, thou quintessence of what is odious and execrable, whose nature is entirely opposite to that of God, and the reverse of his holy law, who claimest the devil for thy fire, while death, and hell, and misery, confess thee for their only parent! how hast thou troubled all the creation! upon what creatures hast thou not transmitted thy baleful influence!

YE angels of darkness, once the angels of light, how are you fallen! how changed! how is your fine  
A gold

gold become dim! What plucked you from your starry mansions, where you did walk with God, high in salvation, in the climes of bliss! You were the angels that sinned; therefore you could not keep your first and happy state, but were driven out from God, flung from eternal splendors to everlasting horrors. "The crown is fallen from your head: wo unto us, for you have sinned."

YE sons of men, once were you blessed with innocence and peace, in the morning of your existence, when our grand parents first lifted to the heavens their wondering eyes, and reposed themselves in the blissful bowers of paradise, that happy garden, planted by the Lord, and fitted out for their reception. The under-



understanding was bright as the light. The will, all pure and holy, reigned queen of the affections, and swayed them with a golden sceptre. The memory was faithful to his trust, being replenished only with good things. And O how peaceful was the conscience! how serene! Nothing unholy was hatched in the heart, or uttered by the lips, or manifested by the actions. Disease had not invaded our body; death would not have dissolved our frame. We should have been strangers to the miseries of life, and to the dreary mansions of the grave. But sin, that cursed monster, sin hath quenched our intellectual light; hath intrallied the will to vile unruly passions; hath vitiated the memory, tenacious now of evil; hath banished true peace from the conscience. Some

are harassed with direful apprehensions, and consumed away with fearful terrors. What multitudes are stretched on the bed of pain! It was sin which bade the head to ache, fevers to revel through our veins, convulsions shake the human frames, and agues agitate our bodies.

SEE there in that house of mourning the pale and ghastly corpse extended on the bed. Descend into the silent grave, and view the putrefying flesh, and the mouldering bones. Ah! where are we! To what are we reduced! Is this that heaven-laboured form, which wore the divine resemblance! Yes, yes: "Sin entered into the world, and  
" death by sin; and so death passed  
" upon all men, for that all have  
" sinned."

BUT

BUT can we venture lower still in our meditations into those dismal regions, where God's mercies are clean gone, and where he will be favourable no more? Hear how they shriek and roar; see how they toss in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone!--Unhappy beings, what brought you to that place of torment? "We are filled with  
" the fruit of our own ways, and  
" are reaping the wages of sin."  
Yes; it was sin which laid the foundation-stone of your prison, and filled it with these inexhausted treasures of wrath and indignation.

NOT in the rational creation only we discern the fatal evils of this accursed thing. "The whole creation groaneth and travelleth in  
" pain together until now." Once

6      *On the great evil of sin.*

it died of a dropfy of waters in the days of Noah, and shortly will expire in a fever of flames, when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Even now the husbandman, conscious of the sickness of nature, acts like physician to the earth. Sometimes he opens her veins with the plough, and covers with soil, as with a strengthening plaster; sometimes lays her asleep, by suffering to lie fallow for a time. Without these necessary precautions she would refuse to yield her increase, and cleanness of teeth would be in all our borders.

It is a small thing for sin thus to affect the whole creation. The garden of Gethsemane knows, and Calvary can tell, how sin hath affected



fects even the great Creator. Bread of life, why wast thou hungry? Fountain of life, why wast thou thirsty? Why wast thou a man of sorrows, O thou Consolation of Israel? Thou Glory of the human race, wherefore wast thou a reproach of men, and despised of the people? Thy visage was more marred than any man, and thy form than the sons of men. Sin nailed thee to the cross; sin stabbed thee to the heart; sin, like a thick impenetrable cloud, eclipsed thy Father's countenance to thy disconsolate soul; sin laid thee in a grave, O thou Resurrection and the Life.

Who would have believed, that the enemy would have entered within the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem, pulled angels from their  
thrones,

8      *On the great evil of sin.*

thrones, and brought even God himself from his high habitation, from excellent glory, from ineffable joys, to poverty and reproach, to sorrow and tribulation, and to the most inglorious death!

O HEAVY burden! under whose weight such multitudes of creatures groan; which made the mighty God, clothed with our flesh, to sweat great drops of blood; though sinners walk lightly on beneath the mighty load. O dreadful plague! O formidable sickness! not to be chased away by a less costly medicine than the most precious blood of Christ, by whose stripes we are healed. O deadly poison! even when presented in a golden cup, and sweet unto the taste, it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder,

adder, and never fails to prove bitterness in the latter end. Nor can it be expelled by any other way than lifting up the Son of man, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. O mighty debt, whose payment could impoverish him, whose is the silver and the gold, who "though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich!" O ugly stain! O inveterate pollution! not to be washed away by all the rivers that run into the sea. In vain we take unto us nitre and much soap; in vain we use our most vigorous endeavours to purge away our blot. Sooner might the Ethiopian change his skin, and the leopard his spots. The only Fuller that is equal to this mighty work, is he who purges the conscience.

10 *On man's extreme misery by sin.*

conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. The blood of the Lamb is the only purgatory that makes you whiter than the snow.

WHEN, O when shall I hate thee with a perfect hatred, thou worse than death! When shall I be afraid of thee alone, and be ashamed of thee alone, O thing exceeding sinful! When shall I be delivered from thy abhorred dominion! O when shall thy destructions have a perpetual end!

*On man's extreme misery by sin.*

WHO can refrain from tears, whose eye of reason hath snatched but a cursory glance of mankind's numerous woes? Who but



*On man's extreme misery by sin.* 11

but he whose heart is made of stone, and is lost to every impression of benevolence? As the dancing spark flies upward, so man is born unto trouble. Unhappy creatures, that kept not your primeval state! Full early you revolted from your Creator God, in whose smile alone your happiness might dwell. The sparkling crown of innocence is fallen from your head. Hence all these fatal evils of your race. Ah me! what ghastly spectres are these! See moon-struck madness replenishing the melancholy bedlam, and torturing despair, a terror to herself, and all around her. See there oppression with iron hands, and heart of steel; poverty with her hollow eyes, her tattered garments, and sordid habitation; and all the family of pain, who tear the pillow from  
beneath

12 *On man's extreme misery by sin.*

beneath our head, while sleep affrighted flies from our eye-lids. Shall I mention, in the next place, drudgery with her grievous looks, toiling at the oar, or stooping under the burden? Alas! with what laborious efforts do mortals spend their vitals, to gain a wretched sustenance for themselves and their tender offspring, to be defended from the gnawings of hunger, and power of chilling cold!-----But who is that grizly tyrant who rides upon a pale horse, and shakes a dreadful dart? I know thee whothou art, thou king of terrors; I know thee by thy clattering bones, and by thy dismal train, hell and the grave, which follow hard behind thee.

WHAT creature is not armed against thee, O man, who all espouse  
their

their Maker's quarrel? There are, whom the angels of darkness harass with dreadful temptations, and still more dreadful possessions. The angels of light lothe and detest such polluted beings, and frequently have been the executioners of direful vengeance. I might relate the numerous ills to which we are exposed from the inhabitants of air, the beasts of the earth, and even the fishes of the sea. How hateful to men the hostile race of scaly serpents, hissing adders, ravenous lions, prowling wolves, hideous and weeping crocodiles? And even the puny race of locusts and caterpillars have scourged guilty nations for their crimes. How frequently have fire and water, these serviceable elements, made horrid insurrections, disastrous to human race? Populous  
B cities,

14 *On man's extreme misery by sin.*

cities, with gilded palaces, and lofty temples, have smoked in fiery ruins; and in old time, the dwellings of sinful men were swept away by a watery inundation. In vain the shrieking wretches betook themselves for safety to the lofty battlements of houses, the tops of highest trees, or even the summits of the aerial mountains. Hear how the earth groans under the burden of thy sins! Here she spreads a barren wilderness, an idle desert; there lifts a frightful ridge of rocks, whence in many places we look down with giddy horror. In some countries she belches fire and smoke from dreadful volcanoes, tremendous indeed to all who hear, but much more terrible to those who live in the neighbouring city, or in the villages of the circumjacent plain.



plain. Be it so, that these awful phenomena of nature, and others of like threatening aspect, bespeak not this our globe to be the habitation of an accursed race; what shall we say to useless choaking weeds, and poisonous plants, of which she is a willing parent, whilst she refuses to produce the foodful grain, unless when much caressed and importuned? how frequently she disappoints our fond hopes, and baulks our expectations? When she refuses to yield her increase, then it is we have cleanness of teeth in all our borders, while pale famine walks abroad with her evil arrows. The staff of bread is broken, and feeble man totters, and falls, and dies. At other times she expands her jaws, and swallows up alive vast multitudes of rational beings. Earth-

16 *On man's extreme misery by sin.*

quake, men tremble when thou art but named! who can think of thee without horror? O what dire consternation in that dreadful moment! Whither, ah! whither can they fly from the doleful calamity? Avert it, Heaven. Execute not thy threatened vengeance upon these guilty lands, and our proud metropolis. If thou hast a-mind to punish us, O visit with some milder rod, some gentler minister of wrath.-----Not the earth alone on which we tread, but the air in which we live, and move, and have our being, proves deathful to our wretched race. Sometimes she summons her stormy winds, her roaring tempests, and bids them shake the walls of stone, and dash the wall-built vessel on the rock. Vain is the help of tough cables, and tenacious anchors. The  
mighty

mighty waters at once receive the valuable cargo, and the despairing mariners. How often she is infected with the wide-wasting pestilence! Then death's shafts fly thick, and the hungry grave rejoices at the uncommon fare. Yet, ugly monster! she never says, It is enough.---- But with no greater calamity can you be visited, ye sons of men, than those which claim your own species for their original. Fell are the monsters of the Libyan deserts; but not to be compared with the abhorred productions of the human heart. Hence matchless killing envy, filthy slander; hence persecution with torturing engines, war with her odious din, and bloody garments. How can you have peace among yourselves, when warring with your God?

18 *On man's extreme misery by sin.*

NOR is there any period of life wherein we are exempted from wo. Not even the smiling infant is secured against the most fatal disasters. The miseries of childhood are apparent. Affliction spares not the blooming youth, nor reverences the venerable old man. Even age itself, what is it? An incurable distemper, always terminating in death. See how the countenance is shrivelled up with wrinkles, the shoulders stoop, the hands tremble, the strong men bow themselves, and they that look out of the windows are darkened!

NEITHER can any station or condition rescue from these incumbent miseries. The rich, the honourable, and they who swim in tides of pleasure, can bear witness.

Why



*On man's extreme misery by sin. 19*

Why else would Ahab sicken for Naboth's vineyard, and Haman lay so sore to heart the refractory behaviour of Mordecai? If treasured riches, if sensual delights, added even to knowledge and wisdom, could satisfy the heart, then might thou, Solomon, enjoyed a heaven upon earth, nor complained of vanity and vexation, nor that he who increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow. Alas! even our greatest comforts prove killing; and far from issuing in contentment, we still complain even in large abundance of worldly delights.

WHAT shall we say then to these things? Shall wretched mortals abandon themselves to fullen sorrow, and hopeless desperation? Shall the world be turned into a  
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Bochim?

20 *On man's extreme misery by sin.*

Bochim? Is it a place where his mercies are clean gone, and where he will be favourable no more? Are there not many footsteps of the divine benignity, even in this our earthly mansion? Doubtless there are; for he hath not left himself without a witness, that goodness is essential to his nature: he bids the earth teem with plenty, and the clouds to drop with vegetable fatness. There are pleasures of sight, of smell, of taste, peculiar to the various seasons of the revolving year. Many creatures are yet subservient to our interest, and all the elements are made to contribute for our welfare. Far be it from high-favoured man, to despise the riches of the Almighty's goodness. But O ye everlasting joys, which the glorious gospel reveals! what thoughtful



*On man's extreme misery by sin. 21*

thoughtful being would not be discontented with such a world as this, without the consideration of you! The distant prospect of life and immortality is able, and that alone, to reconcile the heart to the visible oeconomy of God. Even great and sore affliction is deemed but light and vain, because it lasts but for a moment. Eternity apart, the miseries of life would swallow up the joys. But now even these devourers are buried in the capacious womb of vast eternity.

BLESSED be thy condescension,  
O patient Son of God, who disdained not to taste the bitter cup of grief; grief, not thy own, but ours. And blessed be that wisdom, to whose glorious contrivance we are indebted for the cup of consolation

22 *On man's extreme misery by sin.*

lation presented in the gospel, which we may drink, and remember our misery no more.---By various ways the sons of men have tried to extricate themselves from the lamented consequents of their fall. Games and recreations, arts and sciences, yea, many false religions, have been invented for this end. Miserable comforters are they all! Christianity, it is thine alone to chase our gloom of thought, and wipe away our tears; while by thee we are directed to dart our thoughts beyond this transitory world, this inconsiderable speck of time, unto the eternal scene, which shall commence when the last trumpet shall be sounded; we no more repine at the appearances of wo, nor think  
“ our light affliction worthy to be  
“ compared with that glory that  
“ is

*On the inevitable misery, &c. 23*

“ is to be revealed; while we look  
“ not at the things that are seen,  
“ but at the things which are not  
“ seen: for the things that are  
“ seen are temporal, but the things  
“ that are not seen are eternal.”

*On the inevitable misery of the wicked.*

**B**UT there shall be no reward  
unto the evil man. No reward,  
did I say? Nay, if God be just,  
then “ he will render indignation  
“ and wrath, tribulation and an-  
“ guish, to every soul of man that  
“ doth evil, without respect of per-  
“ sons.” To him belongeth ven-  
geance. Though patience may de-  
lay, though clemency may miti-  
gate, though mercy, grace, and  
wisdom, may transfer the punish-  
ment

ment to the person of a Surety; yet still his wrath must be revealed against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men.

DoTH not even nature herself teach us, that sin and punishment are most inviolably connected? For even barbarians could infer, when they saw a viper fasten upon the hand of a person whom they knew not, after he had escaped a dismal shipwreck; "Certainly this man was a murderer; for vengeance suffereth him not to live." How often are the wicked consumed with fearful terrors, when they can be under no apprehension of punishment from men? For they know that it is "the judgment of God, that they who do such things, are worthy of death." Whence are



we struck with trembling at any uncommon appearances of nature? if a storm of thunder and lightning torments the air? if the sun labours in an eclipse? if a glaring comet waves its banner over the nations? Whence the terror of apparitions? Whence the forebodings of misery after death? Whence the prevailing opinion, even among the ancient Jews, that death was to be the consequence of any extraordinary appearance of the Deity? Is it not because we are insolvent debtors, that we dread the face of our injured Creditor? Is it not because we are traiterous rebels, we abhor the presence of our offended Sovereign? Therefore, with Adam, we hide ourselves from the presence of the Lord. And with the widow of Zarephath, we are ready to

VOL. I. C think,

26      *On the inevitable misery*

think, that whatever is more than common, is a messenger of the Lord of hosts to slay us, and bring our sin to remembrance. Oft-times the guilty conscience will create unto itself imaginary horrors, and sinners are in great fear where no fear is, while they are apt to say, with Cain, "Every one that meet-  
"eth me, will slay me." What nation under heaven have not attested the truth of this, while they have appeased their gods with bloody expiatory sacrifices? And (horrid to relate!) their altars have reeked even with human gore: the fruit of the body has been given for the sin of the soul. Whether the dreadful custom may be derived from the mangled tradition of Abraham offering up Isaac; or whether our adversary the devil would,  
by

by stirring them up to such abominations, insult over the guilt of their consciences, and blindness of their hearts, by aping the sacrifice of Christ, hereby intending to discredit the glorious method of salvation; one thing is certain, that mankind, degenerate as they were, did really judge, that an expiation was necessary to be made, and that "he will by no means clear the guilty." And however much their foolish heart was darkened as to the manner of propitiating the Deity; yet certainly the necessity of it is one of the dictates of nature. For could we suppose, that a sinning creature should escape the righteous judgment of God, and feel no effects of his displeasure; how could it appear that he were a God of purer eyes than to behold

C 2                      iniquity?

iniquity? Would there not be too much reason to say, "Every one that doth evil, is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them? and, Where is the God of judgment?" How could his lordship and dominion over the world be maintained, should he forbear to punish the violators of his law? Is it impossible he can be divested of his sovereign rule? or that his creatures can throw off all moral dependance upon him that made them? So it is impossible but the order of punishment must succeed, when the order of obedience is disturbed: and they who burst the bands of the law, must of necessity be bound in the cords of affliction. "Consider this, and be afraid, ye that forget God." While a method is not fallen



fallen upon to appease incensed justice, and separate sin from your souls; if God be the righteous Judge of all the earth; if God be the Lord of his creatures; if God be blessed, (O tremble to think it!), you must be miserable. As the fire devours the chaff, as the flame consumes the stubble; so must you perish at his presence.

BUT let us hearken to the sacred oracles on this interesting subject. "Search ye out of the book of the Lord, and see that every disobedience receives a just recompence of reward." The flames of Sodom, the waters of Noah, the torments of hell, the sufferings of Christ, bear witness unto this. O sin, thou hast kindled a fire that will burn to the bottom of the

C 3      mountains.

mountains. "Behold, he will come  
 " with fire, and with his chariots,  
 " as a whirlwind, to render his an-  
 " ger with fury, and his rebukes  
 " with flames of fire: for by fire,  
 " and with his sword, will the  
 " Lord plead with all flesh, and  
 " the slain of the Lord shall be ma-  
 " ny." Nor can we reasonably  
 blame the bowels of the Deity, be-  
 cause he taketh vengeance: for, ac-  
 cording to Moses, it is a branch of  
 his goodness, that he will by no  
 means clear the guilty. According  
 to Joshua, it is because he is a ho-  
 ly God, that he will not forgive  
 our transgressions. According to  
 David, it is because the righteous  
 Lord loveth righteousness, that he  
 will rain upon the wicked snares,  
 fire, and brimstone, and a burn-  
 ing tempest; the portion of their  
 cup.

cup. But especially, had it been an indifferent thing with God to punish, or not to punish the guilty, who can persuade us, that he who afflicts not willingly, nor grieves the children of man, would take such pleasure in bruising his only begotten Son, whom he loved? Was he without necessity exposed to such direful sufferings? Nay: for "God hath set him forth to be "the propitiation, to declare"---his love? True; but to declare also "his righteousness in the remission "of sin, and that he may be just."

BLESSED be that matchless grace and wisdom, that has provided a lamb for a burnt-sacrifice;---that has found a ransom;---that has opened a city of refuge;---that has reconciled mercy and truth, and  
righteousness

32 *On the inevitable misery, &c.*

righteousness with peace. O that the gracious Redeemer, without whose kindly interposition we had better been crushed in the very bud of being, might for ever live in our hearts, might for ever be esteemed above all other beloveds, might for ever be the reigning subject of our thoughts, both when we wake and when we sleep! “If we forget thee, O blessed Jesus, then let our right hand forget her cunning. If we do not remember thee, let our tongue cleave to the roof of our mouths; if we prefer not thee above our chief joy.” O let us never drink that as water, which cost the effusion of thy blood! Let us never have that sweet in our mouth, which tendered to thy lips the vinegar and gall! Let us never rejoice in that which  
made



made thee exceeding sorrowful !  
nor blest ourselves in that which  
subjected thee to the curse ! nor  
live in that for which thou died !

*On Christ's dying \* in the stead of sin-  
ners, to make full satisfaction for  
their transgressions.*

**T**HAT Christ died for his people,  
not merely for their good, but  
in their room and place, is a fun-  
damental article of our holy reli-  
gion, and a grand peculiarity of

\* The death of Christ includes, not only his sufferings, but his obedience. The shedding of his precious blood, was at once the grand instance of his suffering, and the finishing act of his obedience. In this view it is considered, and thus it is interpreted, by his own ambassador ; who, speaking of his divine Master, says, " He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," Philip. ii. 8. *Hervey's Dialogues, vol. 2. p. 47.*

the

the gospel; though regarded by many as only a speculative point, and by many traduced as a senseless absurdity, inconsistent with reason and the perfections of the Deity. And here I must confess, that if we are not to attend to the sacred oracles as our rule; if we are to be solely conducted in our researches by the light of nature and reason, our cause is lost. For though the doctrine itself is not contrary to found reason, it is the mystery of his will, which is hid from the wise and prudent, and which would never have entered into our thoughts, if God had not been pleased to reveal it. Let us go to the law and testimony, and, according to the observation of a very eminent divine, the death of Christ is exhibited in three capital views;

views; as a price, a punishment, and as a sacrifice. And it will from every one of these appear, with the brightest evidence, that the death of Christ was a true and proper satisfaction in the room of his elect people.

LET us begin with it as a *price*. Now, what is a price? A price is a valuable compensation of one thing for another. A slave is redeemed from captivity, a debtor from prison, when some gracious redeemer procures their liberty, by giving some equivalent to the person by whom they are detained. We are debtors; we cannot pay unto God what we are owing. We are captives, and we cannot hasten to be loosed. Jesus Christ is the merciful Redeemer, who pays the sum  
we

we were owing, and says to the prisoners, "Go forth." Will we not believe an apostle, when he tells us, "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price?" Would you know what this price is? Another apostle will tell, "Ye are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." Now, though it be true, that there is a redemption by power mentioned in the scripture; yet redemption by price is the only proper redemption: and we cannot reasonably doubt, but redemption by price is the meaning of the most remarkable texts of scripture, where Christ is characterized by this lovely denomination. What hath he obtained for us by his death? Eternal redemption, Heb. ix. 12. What have we through



through his blood? Redemption and forgiveness of sins, Eph. i. 7. What is Christ made unto us of God? Sanctification and redemption, 1 Cor. i. 30. What did they look for, that expected the coming of the Messias? Redemption in Israel, Luke ii. 28. Even Job could say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," chap. xix. 25. We sold ourselves for nought, and we are redeemed without money of our own. The redemption of the soul was too precious, to be effected by our impoverished stock. But we are not redeemed without money to the Lord Jesus, "who gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity." The ransom was paid down, the price beyond all price; a sum too large for the arithmetic of angels to compute. Let the ad-

versaries bring forth their strong reasons. If, say they, the death of Christ was a proper price, it was paid to the devil, whose captives we were. No; it was paid to God, whose captives we were; the devil was only his slave, jailor, and executioner. But, say they, if it was paid to God, it was paid by Christ to himself. And where is the absurdity here? It is true, a man cannot satisfy himself as to a money-debt, by giving money to himself, that another owes him; yet as to criminal debt, there is nothing to hinder a just judge, even among men, to satisfy his own law, by submitting to what it requires. Nor does this gospel-doctrine calumniate the Deity, as though he were a greedy tyrant, that will let no prisoners go, unless he can get great riches for their ransom.

For

For our price did not enrich him, but only paved the way for our being released, to the honour of his justice.

NEXT, let us consider it as a *punishment*. A punishment is never inflicted by a just governor, except upon transgressors of the law; for "to punish the just, is not good." It is for the punishment of evil-doers that magistrates are set up by God. Now, if the death of Christ was a punishment, it must unavoidably follow, that it was vicarious. Why wouldst thou, O heavenly Father, command the sword of justice to awake, and smite the man that is my Fellow? Surely it was not for his own fault; for "he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." Even Pilate acquitted

D 2

him,

him, and Judas absolved him. Why then did the almighty Sovereign of heaven permit such an innocent person to be put to death? Why did not the thunders awake? Lo! here the mystery is unfolded; he died, "the just for the unjust, "that he might bring us to God. He "was cut off, but not for himself; "for the transgression of my people was he smitten." Let insolent cavillers object, that it degrades our Messias, to regard him in the light of an executed felon; the lower the humiliation, the deeper is the love.

LASTLY, That Christ died in the room and stead of his people, appears from its being called a *sacrifice*. Who knows not, that our Redeemer is often stiled a High Priest? His human nature was the victim,



victim, his divine nature the altar, his body was the tabernacle. Who knows not, that the legal high priests did bear the sins of the people? and because they could not atone for the people, by laying down their own lives, they offered bullocks, goats, lambs, and sheep. Whatever absurd accounts our ancient and modern Socinians have invented of the meaning of sacrifices of expiation, most certainly the language of them was, O Lord, I have sinned; I deserve to die; but I beseech thee, let thine anger fall on this my victim, or on that which is signified by it; and be merciful to me a sinner. Thus God was ceremonially appeased, sin was expiated, and the Israelite was forgiven.

*The union betwixt Christ and believers.*

THE suffering Redeemer had now resigned his breath, after he had implored the divine forgiveness to his bloody murderers, and with an amazing loud cry, commended his departing spirit into the hands of his heavenly Father, who shewed it the path of life. A scene it was, which Nature trembled to behold. The sun called in his rays, and mourned in sackcloth. The temple rent her veil, to testify at once her indignation, and that the way into the holiest of all was now made manifest. And even the rocks, the flinty rocks, upbraided with the hardness of their hearts, the un pitying tormentors of the Lord of glory.

glory. Lo! there he hangs a lifeless corpse. A wealthy disciple obtains a warrant to perform the last kindly offices. The mangled body is wrapped in fine linen, and decently interred. In vain you seal the stone, and appoint a watch: still these remains are the body of Christ, and the peculiar care of Heaven, which shall not see corruption. For the third day shall see him arising from the bed of death, and what is now sown in dishonour shall be raised in glory.-----So, just so, the elect who are chosen in Christ from all everlasting, even while dead in trespasses and sins, and lying in the grave of the corrupt natural state, are regarded by God as the body to which he was federally united in the counsel of peace. Was it impossible for the fleshly part  
of

of the Redeemer, to see putrefaction in the grave, and to remain under his gloomy power for ever? Equally impossible it is those should pine away in their iniquities, who are Christ's dead men; whom he has loved with an everlasting love. Within two days he will revive them, the third day he will raise them up, and they shall live in his sight. According to the gracious promise, by the mouth of the prophet *Isaiah*, they shall not always remain in the congregation of the dead. "For thus saith the Lord, "Thy dead men shall live, together "with my dead body shall they "arise. Awake and sing, ye that "dwell in dust."

A FEDERAL union there is, in scripture-reckoning, between the  
Lord



Lord Jesus, and those who are predestinated unto life. An union which commences not only before they are born into the world of grace, but before they were born into the world of nature. Before they were born, did I say? nay, it is an union ancient as eternity itself; and grace was given them in Christ before the world began. With him they were crucified; with him they died; with him they descended into the grave; when he rose from the dead, they also did arise; when he ascended on high, they also ascended, and sat down with him in heavenly places. Yet still this blessed connection with the glorious Surety, is a secret reserved in the breast of God; and they are by nature the children of wrath, even as others, until, in the day of conversion, they  
are

are actually united unto Christ by a mystical implantation.

IN the worlds of nature and art, there are found many conjunctions; and which of them is not summoned by the Spirit of God to shadow forth this supernatural one? As the body is joined to the garments which it wears, to the head with which it is adorned, to the soul wherewith it is animated; as the mother to the child conceived in the womb; as the root to the branches; as the foundation to the superstructure; as the husband to the wife; so is Christ unto believers. They have put him on as a garment; they are knit together, they are nourished, they increase by him as a head with the increase of God. He is their life; it is not they that live, but

but Christ liveth in them. He is formed in their hearts. In him they are rooted as branches in the vine, built up as lively stones upon a living foundation. Great is the nearness of the husband and wife, when they are no more twain, but one flesh: but still more close is this connection; for he that is joined to the Lord, is one spirit.

Does any one of these similitudes convey but an imperfect idea of this mysterious unity, let the remaining ones contribute their help to aid your apprehensions. But after all, they fall infinitely short of the thing they are intended to adumbrate. And therefore the wisdom of God compares it to an union, by which indeed it is infinitely transcended. In behalf of his beloved people, he  
prays

prays the Father, "That they may  
 "be one," saith he, "in us, as  
 "thou, Father, art in me, and I in  
 "thee.\*"----It is true, they are not  
 joined unto the Redeemer by such  
 an essential conjunction as is be-  
 twixt the sacred persons of the  
 Godhead; nor by such a personal  
 union as is between the eternal  
 Son and his temporal humanity.  
 It is not an union of persons in one  
 nature, like the former; nor of na-  
 tures in one person, like the latter:  
 but an union of a multitude of per-  
 sons, not merely unto the doctrine  
 of Christ, not merely unto the grace  
 of Christ, but the person of Christ,  
 considered not as God only, not as  
 man only, but as God-man.-----  
 They are indeed linked together by  
 the bonds of government and sub-

\* John xvii. 21.

jection,



jection, and by the ties of strongest friendship: that, is of a political; and this, of a moral kind. But shall we say, the mysterious expressions we mentioned above, denote no more but this; Believers are joined to Christ by the bands of government and friendship? Does the Spirit of God then wrap up the plainest things in darkest phraseologies? Is this to the honour of the scriptures? No: that be far from the Spirit of wisdom and revelation; the perfection of the sacred oracles. It is not the dark phrases, but the sublime and heavenly thing, of which the apostle of the Gentiles is discoursing, when he says, "This is a great mystery; I speak concerning Christ and the church."

CHRIST Jesus and believers are  
VOL. I. E the

the parties; the Spirit and faith are the bonds; the law and the gospel are the instruments; the sacraments of divine institution are the seals, in this mysterious coalition. Mysterious indeed, which shall not be thoroughly apprehended but in the light of glory. For thus the promise runs, "In that day shall ye know that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; and I in you, and you in me."

A MYSTERY this, worthy to be contemplate of angels and arch-angels. Angels they see, but saints experience it. It is one of the deep things of God, which the natural man receiveth not; and even the spiritual man is unable to comprehend it. But shall it therefore be rejected as incredible, when it is only incomprehensible?

comprehensible? Christians believe greater mysteries than this: and without all peradventure, the less is confirmed by the greater. And philosophers acknowledge the reality of unions, for which they cannot account.

BUT O! thrice happy they who are thus joined unto the Lord; and found in Christ, not having their own righteousness! They are called by his name; they are partakers of his fulness; and in all their afflictions, he is afflicted. Though he resides in heavenly places, and they are sojourners on earth; yet are they blessed in him with all spiritual blessings. You trample upon the toe, the head cries out, "Why persecute thou me?" But when you clothe his naked, and feed his hungry

members; he deems you did it to himself. "I was hungry, and ye  
" gave me meat: naked, and you  
" clothed me."

LET supercilious, puny mortals, regard with contempt; or cold indifference, the faints of the Most High; but O! let my delights be with you, ye excellent of the earth. Christ is not ashamed to call you brethren; God is not ashamed to call himself your God. A more exalted honour this, than to wear an imperial crown, and fill the throne of the whole earth!-----To you there is no condemnation, nor falling totally away. You are the members of Christ; therefore he knows your wants: you are the body of Christ; therefore he will supply them. Christ is your head;  
he



he will cleanse your defilements: Christ is your head; he will cure your diseases. What though you be in poverty? you are in Christ. What though you be in reproach? you are in Christ. Let death divide your souls and bodies; let the grave calcine your flesh and bones; let the four winds war for your dust; your vital union with Christ shall still remain. When you shall render up the ghost, you die in the Lord; and when you descend into the peaceful grave, your dust shall sleep in Jesus.-----Can any force, can any fraud, find means to enter into the heaven of heavens; and pluck an eye, or tear a limb, from the glorified humanity of the exalted Redeemer?---And even in the days of his humiliation, the soldiers could not break his bones, because

they saw he was already dead. For so it was foretold in ancient prophecy, "A bone of him shall not be broken." But ye are kept as the apple of his eye; and are the members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

*On faith.*

**H**APPY the man who lives in mortal flesh a life of faith upon the Son of God! Though he dwells not in the gilded palace, he has the Most High for his habitation. Though his food be homely, he fares deliciously every day upon the hidden manna. For, O that noble gift of God! he in whose heart she dwells, is at once possessed of riches, and honours, and pleasures.

Let

Let others curiously dispute where she resides ; in what faculty, in the understanding or the will ; be it my exalted privilege to have her formed in my soul. The mountains may depart ; the hills may be removed ; the solid earth, with the surrounding heavens, may pass away : but her foundations are everlasting. Sooner shall chaos come again, and God deny himself ; sooner shall the natural and the moral world be tossed into confusion, than that should fail by which she is supported. Great is that revenue of glory she brings unto her God, whether she trembles at the threatening, or relies upon the promise, which he hath spoken in his holiness ; but most of all when her main object Christ is before her eyes, as the Saviour from sin and wrath. When  
angels

angels circle the throne of God with heavenly anthems; and yield the most unspotted obedience to the divine law; they glorify their Maker. But when by her the guilty, self-condemned wretch, devolves upon the Lord the burden of innumerable sins; and trusts for pardon of them all; this is glory to God in the highest. Though each obediential act is for the praise of God; and glorifies some one perfection of his nature; it is hers to render him the glory of them all.

As reason is superior to sense, so faith has the pre-eminence over reason. Be reason revered in matters that fall within her sphere; but when she ventures into the deeps of God, the seas where faith has all the sovereignty; when acting



ing like herself, she lowers her sails. As sense would seem to tell us many things which reason contradicts, so faith will rectify the fond mistakes of reason; nor ought she be dissatisfied. Faith only shuts the eye of reason; not picks it out. Nor these alone submit themselves before this noble grace; even other her fellow-virtues do obeisance. Though, as a gracious quality, she stands upon a level with the rest; yet as an instrument, she far excels in glory. She cannot boast indeed of her intrinsic worth, but of the post of honour which she fills by Heaven's appointment. She only is the general-receiver of all the blessings of the gospel. By her we call Heaven's rich unfathomable mines our own. Because she humbleth herself, therefore hath God highly exalted her,  
and

and given her a name above every grace. Even charity herself is only greater in duration ; for she abideth when faith shall fail, as to its actings ; and die, like Moses, in the mount. Such is her humble nature, that even the jealous God, who will not give his glory to another ; even he is found to give his glory unto her. We are saved by faith ; we are justified by faith. She faithfully returns the glory to her object. He hath regarded the low estate of his handmaid, because himself has said, " Them that honour me, I will honour."

THOUGH weak in herself, she is strong in the Lord ; her very weakness is her strength. She overcomes the devil, and the world, and the flesh. She binds up the arm of  
vengeance,

vengeance, and wields the arm of omnipotence. The creature is not able to resist her; and the Creator will not. She says unto this mountain of difficulty, "Be thou removed, and cast into the sea." She subdues kingdoms of lusts; quenches the violence of the fire of wrath; stops the mouth of the infernal lion; and escapes the edge of the sword of angry justice. When other graces quit the field, her own arm brings salvation. What shall I say more? "If thou canst believe, all things are possible."

SUCH is her strength, no wonder she is bold as a lion; though timorous and distrustful of the creature. Confiding in the Lord, she is not afraid to venture into the holiest of all. She plays upon the hole of the asp,

asp, and thrusts her hand into the cockatrice's den. "O death, where " is thy sting?" she says with bold defiance. When presumptuous unbelievers are buried in the mighty waters, like the Egyptian host, she passes through the foming waves triumphant. There is none like her in all the earth; who is made without fear.

THOUGH poor in herself, she makes many rich with the treasures of eternity. She is not afraid of the snow for her household; for all her household are clothed in the scarlet robes of everlasting righteousness. Justly she is denominate *precious faith*; when she interests us in precious promises, and applies unto the conscience precious blood.

THERE



THERE are indeed who think her blind and headlong; yet is she a sharp-sighted grace. She comprehends the love of Christ that passeth knowledge. Doctrines, which to the natural man are foolishness, and events that have no present existence, are realized by her. "She is  
" the evidence of things not seen,  
" the substance of things hoped  
" for," though ever so remote in time or place. She is a kind of second sight, not merely to behold spectacles of horror, ghosts, and apparitions; but the King in his beauty, the land that is afar off, the things that are not seen, that are eternal.

IT is true, her strength is to sit still, to look on, while the Lord himself doth wondrously. Like the

lilies of the field, she toils not, neither does she spin.-----And certain bold blasphemers have talked of our most holy faith, as though she were no friend to works of righteousness. Impossible! absurd! for all good works, without exception, are her dear offspring, which issue from her pregnant womb. These are her children which praise her in the gates. And she may say in truth, with the apostle of the Gentiles, "I laboured more abundantly than all the other graces. Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid: nay, we establish the law." The law as a covenant she makes not void: for she presents the perfect righteousness of Christ, which answers every legal charge. And though she strips the law, to all who have her, of the old covenant

covenant form, she turns it to a rule of life, and supplies the believer with most effectual motives to all holy obedience. No work of God can be acceptably performed, till once you have believed. This is his prime command, and your most necessary duty. "For without faith it is impossible to please God," by any doing, or by any suffering. By faith Abraham offered up Isaac his first-born son; and by faith the children of Abraham put the knife unto the throat of their most favourite lusts.

BUT, ah! how few are there among the sons of men, who can lay claim to this invaluable grace! Though all her ways are pleasantness and peace, great is the opposition, by all the powers of corrupt  
F 2 nature,

nature, unto this heavenly virtue. The bigotted Papist will rather undergo the drudgery of dismal superstition. The blinded Pagan will rather chuse to embrue their hands in blood of their own offspring. The perverse Jew, descended from Abraham, only according to the flesh, will rather yield their servile necks to the old galling yoke of antiquated ceremonies, than be at all induced to submit unto the righteousness of faith. They know not, nor will understand the nature of this exalted grace. Though even in matters of this world, all know that trust is no uncommon thing. The husbandman, at the return of spring, is not afraid to sow in hope, when he commits the foodful grain unto the furrows of the field: "For his God doth instruct him to discretion."



“discretion.” They who go down to the sea in ships, repose such confidence in their floating vessels, as not to be afraid to trust themselves, and all their worldly riches, unto the mercy of the boisterous waves. Why is it that so few will venture their eternal all, and their temporal felicity, unto the faithful word of promise? The man who sows his grain in the furrow, is frequently disappointed of his hopes. And many a time the loaded vessel becomes a prey to the unpitying element of water. But “he that believeth shall not be ashamed, world without end.”

*On forgiveness of sin, through faith in  
Christ's divine blood \*.*

WHEN the guilt of innumerable evils stares me in the face, and angry conscience rouses from her slumber; where shall I fly for refuge? where shall I hide my head? how lay the grisly spectres? Ye favourite lusts, ye pleasing comforts, ye amusing recreations, in vain ye lend your aid. Let Cain, with his hands reeking in blood, betake him-

\* By the blood of Christ is frequently signified in scripture the whole merit of his life and death, of his actions and sufferings, of his trials and graces: which satisfied God's justice, and magnified God's law; which made propitiation for iniquity, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. *Hervey's sermon on the means of safety.*

self

self to building cities; let Saul attempt to find relief from his unquiet mind, in the charms of music, while David touched the pleasant harp; let the drunkard seek for consolation in his flowing bowl, and jolly companions; the fullen ghosts refuse still to depart, when God calls as in a solemn day his terrors round about. Even vows and resolutions, prayers and tears, costly sacrifices, and solemn promises of future amendment, cannot recal the departed peace. Let Pagans, with horrid rites, seek reconciliation with their fancied gods, and peace unto their consciences; let carnal Jews think to have matters adjusted by their ceremonial observances, being ignorant of the righteousness of God; scourge yourselves to death, ye blinded Papists,  
and

and waste your carcases to ghastly skeletons, by with-holding sleep from your eyes, and nourishment from your mouths; travel to the remotest climes in weary pilgrimages; it is all in vain. Fools that you are, to think you shall have peace, by walking after the imagination of your own hearts. “The way  
“of peace you have not known:  
“there is no judgment in your go-  
“ings.”

FOR unto whom should we go  
but unto thee, O thou bleeding Sa-  
viour! By thy blood hast thou  
made peace betwixt an offended  
Deity, and offending mortals. No  
cause of death was found in thee.  
For us thou drank the bitter cup.  
Far be it from us to substitute our  
pretended sincerity, our sorrowful  
repentance,



repentance, or even the more noble grace of faith, in the room of thy satisfactory sufferings, O thou Prince of peace! By thy seasonable interposition, his anger is turned away; and now it is a righteous thing with God abundantly to pardon.

HAPPY, thrice happy they, who come unto God by him; whose iniquity is pardoned, whose transgression is forgiven. Riches and honours, thrones, crowns, and sceptres, cannot greatly add unto their bliss; pain and poverty, ignominy and reproach, cannot greatly diminish their happiness. It is true, O ye favourites of Heaven, the fact of sin cannot be taken away, the desert of sin cannot be removed; yea, even its power and dominion shall not be totally destroyed in your present state

state of imperfection: however, there is no condemnation to you that are in Christ Jesus. No condemnation for your inherent corruption; none for your actual transgressions; none for your past, none for your future provocations. Chastised you may be with the rod of a Father, but not with the wounds of an enemy. "It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?" What though your sins are many? he multiplies to pardon. What though your afflictions are great? there is no wrath in the portion of your cup. Though men should condemn you, God will not; though devils accuse you, they shall not prevail. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that riseth in judgment against thee, thou shalt condemn."

*through Christ's divine blood.* 71

“condemn. This is the heritage  
“of the servants of the Lord: and  
“their righteousness is of me, faith  
“the Lord.”

FLY, ye profane, who turn this  
grace of God into lasciviousness.  
Be awakened, ye presumptuous, who  
fondly dream your sins are pardon-  
ed, because ye have forgotten them,  
or because ye have felt some pangs  
of conviction, or because judgment  
is not speedily execute against your  
evil works. How can ye be pardon-  
ed, who have such slight thoughts  
of the God who bestows, the Savi-  
our who procures it, the gospel which  
reveals it? Ye that are ready to  
perish under the pressure of your ini-  
quities, and ye that are of a heavy  
heart on account of your innumer-  
able transgressions, here is a strong  
cordial,

cordial, a refreshful draught from the wells of salvation. O drink, and remember your misery no more.

“ God was in Christ, reconciling  
“ the world unto himself, not im-  
“ puting their trespasses unto them.”

NOR is it vain presumption in you to believe, that he in Christ is, at this present hour, pacified towards you for all that you have done. Though you have been wicked and unrighteous, though your sins have been of a crimson die, scarlet-coloured abominations; the blood of Jesus can wash out the deadly tincture, and make you white as finest wool, or virgin snow. Was it any difficulty for the Red sea, to cover with its waves the numerous host of Egypt, when Pharaoh, with his captains and common foldiers, chariots  
riots



riots and herfes, did fink unto the bottom as a ftone? No more for the ocean of unbounded love to fubdue all your iniquities; not the common foldiers only of ordinary provocations, but the moft grizly and gigantic fins. In the prefence of his exalted Majefty, your perfons are but like the fmall duft of the balance; which is not confiderable enough to fway the fcale, and which the gentleft breath can blow away. Juft as insignificant are your fins in prefence of his pardoning mercy.

NOR is it with grudge and reluctance the liberal God beftows this perfect gift. Once he delighted in wrath, when it pleased him to bruife his beloved Son. That was his act, his ftrange act; his work, his ftrange work. Has he

no pleasure in the death even of the guilty sinner; as himself declares; why then in the death, the cruel death, of the innocent Immanuel? The reason, the amazing reason is, because he delighted in mercy; in mercy to the human race. Therefore it pleased the Father to bruise him.

GLORIFY God for this mercy, ye pardoned ones. A distinguished blessing it is, which will not accent the song of angels, but of the redeemed from among the human race. Rejoice not that your wealth is increased; that your circumstances are prosperous; but that your iniquity is pardoned. Fear the Lord and his goodness; and walk humbly with thy God.

REJECT

*through Christ's divine blood.* 75

REJECT not the counsel of God against your own souls, you who have not yet fled for refuge unto this hope set before you, as you would not rob God of his glory, nor yourselves of peace. Will you neglect this great salvation? will you say unto the Almighty, Depart from us; thy gifts be to thyself? Cursed shall ye be of the Lord, whose glory it is to pass over a transgression. The Lord Jesus Christ shall subscribe thy condemnation; and all the holy angels shout their applause. Amen, says the church militant; Amen, the church triumphant. "In returning and rest should you been saved; in quietness and confidence should have been your rest: but you would not hear." Lo! there the men who made not the Lord their confidence;

G 2

fidence; who robbed the Lord of his glory; and would not be beholden to him for the pardon of their iniquities. Behold the time of their visitation is come; and where shall they fly for help? If in this manner a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him? They would not take hold of his strength; they would not make peace; they would not consider any of his ways. See now the red right arm of vengeance takes hold of the glittering sword of justice. A sword; a sword is furnished with the oil of mercy, that was despised and affronted. See how he cleaves their reins asunder, and breaketh them with breach upon breach. Merciful Lord! it is a fearful thing to fall into thy hands; when thou art angry, the nations shall not be able to abide



abide thy indignation. Make us wise unto salvation, to know the things that belong to our peace; and to fly to our strong hold, while we are the prisoners of hope.

*On evangelical repentance for sin.*

LET us first begin with the thoughts of his heart, whose repentance is of the gospel-kind, and not to be repented of. Of all evils, he is persuaded that sin is the greatest; and of all sinners, he is disposed to think that himself is the chiefest. He has obtained a view of that abominable thing, which before he condemned only in words; and sees it, in the gospel-light, the heaviest of debts; the ugliest of stains; the weightiest of burdens; and the most

G 3

deadly

deadly sting. Though no enormities of behaviour should tarnish his civil reputation among men, yet he sees that innumerable evils compass him about; that he is the man who has violated every precept of the law; the devil, who has transgressed against a gracious God, by a thousand provoking iniquities. Having descended into his own breast, and contracted a more thorough acquaintance with the plagues of his own heart, he thinks less favourably of himself than he can possibly do of others, or they of him. He blesses and adores that sparing goodness that bore with him so long; nor filled him with the fruit of his own ways. Even his most holy duties, which some would call his righteousness; these he discerns to labour under so many imperfections,

imperfections, as to deserve the epithet of filthy rags. Nor are these self-abasing thoughts the mere remonstrances of natural conscience, which pass away like the morning-cloud, and early dew; or the dazzling flashes of the lightning, by which the benighted traveller is rather blinded than directed: far less must they be held the melancholy suggestion of wicked spirits, intending to exaggerate the guilt of his iniquities, and drive him to despair. But they are the fixed and sober sentiments of his soul; which the holy and blessed Spirit begets in his mind, when he strikes home the word of the law upon the conscience. But chiefly, the persuasion of forgiveness with God operates on his heart with the most kindly influence. The knowledge of sin, which is by  
the

the law, may be productive of servile fear, and worldly sorrow; but it is the province of the gospel alone to paint it in such colours, as to make him ashamed, yea, even confounded, because he does bear the reproach of his youth. O glorious grief! O noble pain! He is scorched with the beams of goodness; and waters with his tears, even the joyful pardon of his sins. Not so much for the punishment they bring upon his own nature, as for the indignity done to the divine. He looks on thee, whom he has pierced, O bleeding Propitiation! and mourns, not so much for himself, as for thee; as the tender-hearted parent mourns, with unfeigned sorrow, when the eye-lids of an only son are closed in death; or the remains of a first-born are consigned  
over



over to the silent grave; or as the sorrowful Israelites at Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddo, wept for the good Josiah, when snatched away by an untimely death, in the sins of the people; and whilst he mourns, he tastes more true refreshment than worldly joy can give.

WHEN such are the inmost sentiments of his soul; no wonder that out of the abundance of his heart, the most ample confessions of sin do flow from his tongue. Sometimes to men, whom he may have scandalized; but always to God, whom he has mainly offended. Far from covering his transgression, as Adam, he knows not where to find expressions black enough to set forth the extreme odiousness of his guilt.

The

82 *On evangelical repentance.*

The powers of language fail him ;  
and with the most expressive silence,  
he lays his hand upon his mouth,  
his mouth in the dust, as being un-  
able to declare, either the vastness  
of the multitude of his iniquities,  
or the grievousness of their aggra-  
vation.

To the words of his mouth cor-  
respond the actions of his life ; and  
the resolutions of his heart, now rent  
from sin, as well as for it ; though  
once it was dear to him as the apple  
of his eye. Be gone, deceitful lusts,  
he says: too long you have prevailed  
against me by your bewitching in-  
fluence. Farewel, ye gilded snares,  
ye soul-destroyers, ye murderers of  
my God ; dyed crimson with his  
blood. Welcome, thou glorious  
liberty, that frees me from the bon-  
dage

dage of corruption. Now every the smallest degree of moral evil shows vile in his account; he abstains from every appearance of it; and carefully avoids the avenues of temptation. He does not merely relinquish one sin, that with the greater freedom he may indulge another, to which he is equally addicted. For sin, as such, is the object of his aversion. But chiefly, if any iniquity has prevailed against him more than another; if any sin there be that easily besets him; against this, he levels his opposition, and cheerfully foregoes it. As the captive exile hastens to be loosed, and with a joyful heart forsakes his dungeon; so he abandons, with unreluctant mind, what formerly he loved.

*On*

*On hungering and thirsting for righteousness.*

**H**E that hungers and thirsts for righteousness, is a happy person; who being convinced of the excellency, suitableness, and absolute necessity, both of a justifying righteousness before God, and an edifying righteousness before men, feels in his own heart a sense of its want, and a desire of supply.

**THOUGH**, in comparison of the wicked, who are full of all unrighteousness, he is filled already with all goodness; yet, when he compares his own attainments in religion, with the superior attainments of other saints, and especially with  
the



the just demands of the holy law, he looks upon himself as more brutish than any man; and that he has not the knowledge of the Holy. Once indeed, before the commandment came, he was pure in his own eyes; and as insensible of the universal pollution of his heart and life, as a beastly drunkard of his spots, though his face and garments are all besmeared with mire and clay. But when the fumes of liquor are dispelled, he awakes as out of a sleep; discerns himself to be a monster of pollution; and his own cloaths do abhor him. He now perceives, that the former good opinion he had of himself, was owing to nothing else but gross inattention to the quality of his own heart, and impotence of thought.

“As when a hungry man dream-

VOL. I.

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“eth,

“eth, and behold, he eateth; but  
“he awaketh, and his soul is emp-  
“ty: or as when a thirsty man  
“dreameth, and behold, he drink-  
“eth; but he awaketh, and be-  
“hold, he is faint, and his soul hath  
“appetite.” “Woes me,” he cries,  
“I am undone: I am a man of  
“unclean lips: and, wherewith  
“shall I come before the Lord?”----

As hunger has reconciled men to the most incredible hardships; and for a drink of water, kingdoms have been given away: (for hunger and thirst are vital appetites, which, if they are not supplied, will bring inevitable death): so is this spiritual and holy appetite supreme, prevalent, and triumphant over all other desires. What is gold to him that is perishing for hunger? what is silver to him that is expiring with thirst?

thirst? And what are thy enjoyments, O vain world, to this hungry and thirsty creature? The persecuted hart doth not more eagerly pant for the water-brooks; nor didst thou, O David, more ardently long for the water of the well of Bethlehem; than the hungry and thirsty Christian for his Saviour's justifying righteousness, and sanctifying Spirit. He contents not himself with the hypocritical wish of Balaam, to die the death of the righteous; nor with the lazy desires of the yawning sluggard, whose hands refuse to labour: but in the sweat of his brows, and exercise of Christian diligence, does he eat his spiritual bread. Where the carcase is, there does he go, with willing steps, to the ordinances of Christ; or rather to Christ him-

self in them, in whom all fulness dwells.-----When it is his meat and drink to do the will of God; how little he envies you of your dainties, that are the workers of iniquity! His hungering and his thirsting, is better than their feasting and carousing. O blessed hunger! O desirable thirst! of which to die were a happiness to be envied. But he will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish. "Bread shall be given them, and water shall be sure." For thus saith the voice of inspiration, "The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." But the wicked "shall wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied."

*On*



*On purity of heart.*

PURITY of heart is that holy disposition of the soul, whereby the Christian, whose conscience is sprinkled with the clean water of Christ's atoning blood from the guilt of his iniquities, is inclined to hate and depart from the pollution of all sin in general, and in particular from the pollution of fleshly lusts.

FIRST, let us describe this holy disposition, as opposed to the predominant power of sin in the general. The pure in heart is a person who cannot satisfy himself with a ceremonial purity, like that of the

H 3

ancient

ancient Pharisees, which consisted only in "putting away the filth of the flesh:" nor with a federal purity, which lies in church-membership: nor with a civil purity, which is no more but a freedom from scandalous sins; and may be entirely owing to a virtuous education, and to restraining common grace. But the Holy Spirit of God has created in him a clean heart, and renewed a right spirit within him. He has seen the loathsome nature of that abominable thing which God's soul hates; of which the vomit of a dog, the poison of a serpent, and the putrefaction of a grave, are but faint emblems. He has seen, that all the faculties of his soul and body; all the periods of his life; and all his thoughts, his words, his actions; are so deeply stained with this moral contagion,

contagion, that the pure eyes of God cannot behold him: yea, he lothes himself in his own sight. He has seen, that this inbred corruption is so deeply ingrained in his nature, that all his own endeavours to wash out the deadly stain, would be as vain, as ineffectual, as to attempt, with common water, to wash out the scarlet dye, or the crimson tincture, from those garments that have thoroughly drunk in these vivid colours; or as if the Ethiopian should think, by this feeble means, to change his hue, or the leopard his spots. He has seen, that Jesus Christ, by his word, by his blood, and by his Spirit, is the only fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. He that came by water and blood, has, by his word and Spirit, begotten in his heart, a purifying faith,

faith, and a purifying hope; and made him, as the King's daughter, all glorious within. It is true, he is not yet without all spots or wrinkles; but only without the spots which are not the spots of God's children. As a fair day may have some clouds; a fair face may have some freckles; and a good field of corn may have some weeds: so the pure in heart may have some blemishes and imperfections. But as by actual attainment, he is purged from the reigning pollution of sin; so by ardent desire, and serious endeavours, he aspires after the perfection of pure and undefiled religion. He cannot boast, that he has already attained it. Ah no! But he wishes for it; he prays for it; he labours after it.

**BUT**



BUT in a special manner, the pure in heart has, in some good measure, gained the mastery over those vile affections, and sensual indulgences of the flesh, of which it is a shame even to speak, and hardly safe even to reprove. He remembers, that the pure eyes of God are always upon him; that the pure Spirit of God inhabits the temple of his body; that he is redeemed with the precious blood of a holy and undefiled Redeemer; and that he is the expectant of an incorruptible, undefiled inheritance. He cleanses his way, by taking heed thereto, according to the pure word of God. He hates the thoughts of impurity. If they are darted into his mind, he disallows them; he groans under them; and suffers them not to lodge within him. He  
hates

hates the words of impurity; the mire and dirt of filthiness, and foolish talking; which is as sure a token of an impure heart, as smoke rushing from the chimney is an indication of fire on the hearth. He hates the deeds of impurity: hates them, not only when perpetrated by others; but if himself has been formerly chargeable with them. He reflects not upon his past follies with gloriation; or with indifference, and cold remorse; but with unfeigned sorrow, and deep humiliation. He hates the occasions of impurity, and labours to avoid them. Conscious of the infirmity of his flesh, and the treachery of his heart, he endeavours to keep at a distance from the incentives to sensuality; makes a covenant with his eyes; and ventures not even to  
the

the utmost verge of his Christian liberty.

HIS mind being first pure, is then peaceable; and he enjoys a holy serenity, which the impure sensualist can have no idea of. The doctrines of religion are plain and clear to his pure mind; he holds the mystery of faith in a pure conscience. His prayer being pure, is fervent and effectual. His hearing the word is profitable, because he lays aside all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness. All things are pure unto him, because he is pure himself; when to the defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure. Would you know the sum of his happiness? You have it all declared in one word, by the Teacher who came from God; to which nothing  
can

can be added; and after which we need say no more; "Blessed are the  
"pure in heart; for they shall see  
"God."

*On holiness, its nature, excellency,  
necessity.*

**O** DIVINE holiness! or shall we call thee by the name of goodness, or righteousness, or uprightness, with what praises shall we extol thee! Thou art the brightest ornament of the universe; more beauteous than the stars of light, or than the roses that strow the footsteps of the spring. The sun himself can boast no glory in thy presence.

THOU art the darling attribute of  
the



the Deity; the brightest pearl of JEHOVAH'S crown. Without thee, an Ichabod were written on every other perfection. Adieu to his wisdom; farewell to his blessedness; the absolute perfection of his nature is no more. Thou art that beauty of the Lord, which, above all, the saints of the Most High are desirous of beholding. In no perfection he more rejoices. By this he swears. With thee the angels swell their notes; when with covered feet, because of shame; and faces veiled, because of reverence; they surround his throne. "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts," they cry; "the whole earth is full of his glory." Omniscience is his piercing eye, omnipotence his powerful arm, and mercy is compared to his yearning bowels; but

holiness is like the face and visage of the Godhead.

CONSULT we the sacred oracles, what attribute is more conspicuous in every description of the Almighty? Read we the volume of creation; he is holy in all his works: the volume of providence; he is righteous in all his ways, of mercy and of judgment. Search and see, if there are not very distinguishing marks of the divine regard to holiness, in every providential way. "Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him: but wo unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him." Witness, ye angels of darkness; and ye damned spirits, attest this truth: "The righteous Lord loveth righteousness;" which God hath written to your dreadful experience

experience in fiery flames. O earth, wherefore dost thou groan, but because thou art the habitation of the ungodly? And wherefore did the fiery deluge destroy your pleasant dwellings, ye cities of the plain? Ye justified believers, whose iniquities are pardoned, whose transgression is forgiven, your Surety felt the effects of that hatred of sin which you should have experienced. Not all the vials of his vengeance poured on the heads of sinful men and angels, can half so loud proclaim the holiness of God, as the sufferings of the innocent and lovely Jesus: who therefore is represented, by an inspired writer, when testifying before-hand of the sufferings of Christ, to turn his meditation upon the holiness of him that inhabits the praises of Israel, when grappling

with the dreadful vengeance due to our iniquities: "My God, my God, " why hast thou forsaken me? " why art thou so far from helping " me?" Am I not the Son of thy love? have I not done always the things that pleased thee? why dost thou hide thy face? why dost thou count me for an enemy, and deal with me as I were an egregious transgressor? But what do I say? I am the Surety of lost sinners, by my Father's commission, by my own consent. My sufferings are just; are necessary, from the holiness of thy nature: and for this amazing transaction, thou shalt rejoice in the praises of Israel to all everlasting.

As every disobedience receives a just recompence of reward; so his countenance



countenance doth behold the upright: he will bless the righteous, and compass them with his favour as with a shield. O blessed Jesus, "thou loved righteousness, and  
" hated iniquity; and God, even  
" thy God, did for this cause anoint  
" thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." And what are all the blessings of the followers of the Lamb, from the smallest crumb, to the ponderous crown of glory, but the reward of holiness; the reward of grace to their implanted, of debt to their imputed righteousness? Yea, even in the place of punishment, where he will be favourable no more, the kind regards of God to goodness and morality will be demonstrated. Those who, though far from righteousness, were not so vicious as others,

shall wear a lighter chain, than their fellows who have been guilty of more atrocious crimes.

YE sons of men, how long will you love vanity? how long will ye turn this glory into shame? Lovely perfection, how much art thou despised in the world! How rarely to be found in the land of the living; whether we search for thee in city or in country, in the lofty palace, or in the humble cottage! How small the number of thy votaries! This man affects to be learned; that to be polite; and another to be witty: but few to be holy in all manner of conversation. Yet are thy pleasures pure, and without alloy. "Thy ways  
"are pleasantness, and all thy  
"paths are peace." How greatly  
they

they reproach thee, who draw thy picture in robes of melancholy, and looks of dark disquietude. Whether thou ledest thy favourites by the still waters of meditation, or brings them to the house of prayer, or makest them lie down in the green pastures of ordinances; thy joys are joys indeed, which nothing earthly gives, or can destroy. Joys that will abide the test; nor flush the cheek of shame, nor render pale with guilt. Under thy kindly influence, what pleasing exercise is afforded to every rational power! In those happy moments, the soul, and all that is within us, is stirred up to magnify and bless his holy name, and all our bones to say, Who is like unto thee? Nor can the countenance dissemble the heart-felt satisfaction. As the blaze of  
crackling

crackling thorns, differs from the light of the day, sent from the sun's bright orb; so differ worldly pleasures from divine. These leave behind no stings of fierce repentance; can greatly triumph over death, and ask the grave, "Where is thy victory?"

WHEN thou withdrawest thy footsteps, the world is out of joint, and all its foundations are out of course. Angels are turned into devils, and heaven is turned into hell. For the retrieving of thy injured honour, the Son of God came down from his exalted throne; and, in the likeness of sinful flesh, stained the cross with his blood. For the advancement of thy interest, the word of God was written, and the exceeding great and precious promises



promises are left unto us, that by these being made partakers of the divine nature, we may cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. And that our souls may be adorned with thy glorious beauty, the Holy Ghost descends into our hearts.

By thee the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour; and the beggar with whom thou dwellest, more honourable than the king upon the throne. When the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the inhabitants of the earth shall die, thou passest over into eternity, where God hath prepared for thee a glorious habitation. When time, and fair creation, are perhaps forgot, thou shalt beam forth in amiable

able effulgence, and become an eternal excellency.

*On peace of conscience.*

THE happy soul, in whose heart this peace of God hath erected her throne, has firmly resolved, with Job, that holy sufferer, that his heart shall not reproach him, with any approven guile, so long as he lives. He goes not about to patch up a fatal peace betwixt his conscience and his lusts; (a very common, dreadful mistake); but if iniquity be in his hand, he puts it far away. He loves the divine law with the most ardent affection;-----hearkens unto its commandments;-----walks according to its unerring rule;-----and walking  
in

in his uprightness, he enters into peace. Being pleasingly conscious of the integrity of his heart, he has this inward testimony for his rejoicing, though he should hear the slanders of many. His conscience, like the wisdom that comes down from above, is first pure, then peaceable. For if even the imperfect morality of the Gentiles, was attended with much serenity and peace: much more shall righteousness and peace, kiss each other in his renewed and spiritual mind; whose conscience is purged from dead works, to serve the living God.

BUT is his own defective righteousness the only rock on which he builds his peace? Then it were of all things the most precarious  
and

and uncertain. Alas! he cannot but be conscious, how small a claim he has to the character of innocence; and how he richly deserves, that the Almighty should write bitter things against him. His conscience is not feared as with a hot iron; but is endued with the most lively feeling of sin, and its desert. Full often he has the sentence of death in himself; and war arises against him. What does he, but betake himself unto that blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better, and more peaceful things, than that of Abel. When thus his heart is spoken to, in these most gentle accents, he knows that ravishing delight which an apostle styles, "The answer of a good conscience." He beholds the crucified Redeemer, as making peace by the blood of his cross, when



when the chastisement of our peace was upon him. Blessed with this noble view, he sits down with great delight under the shadow of his righteousness imputed; the place where he makes his flocks to rest at noon. And, on the dove-like wings of faith, he flies far away, from the windy storm and tempest of an enraged conscience; and finds a quiet sanctuary, and safe retreat, in the clefts of the Rock of ages.

O HAPPY man, whose heart is thus sprinkled from an evil conscience! From what a dreadful inmate is he delivered! infinitely worse than a contentious woman in a wide house. Whilst those miserable wretches that are haunted by this most awful fury, may fitly be compared, even in their jovial

hours, and best estate, to those stately prisons, adorned in the front with all the decorations of the palace. You go in, and behold the abodes of misery; and the dismal dungeons of chained malefactors. He whose conscience thus speaks peace, has something within, that renders him superior to all adversity; that charms all fear and sorrow. Even his cottage outvies the palace. His coarse attire outshines embroidered purple. An house full of sacrifices, where strife of conscience is; may not compare with his most homely food, though it should be no better than a dinner of green herbs. To him the sun shines with a more pleasing light; the birds sing with more melodious notes. Also he lies down, and his sleep shall be sweet. He is not afraid of terror  
by

*On joy in the Holy Ghost.* 111

by night; of the pestilence, that walks in darkness; or of destruction, that wasteth at noon-day. Though he, like good Josiah, should fall by the stroke of hostile sword in the battle; yet still his latter end is peace. Even the decisive hour of judgments needs not appal his heart; because he shall be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless.

*On joy in the Holy Ghost.*

**T**HIS excellent fruit of the Spirit may be viewed, either as that habitual cheerfulness of temper, which the sincere Christian, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, studies to maintain upon all occasions: or it may be considered, as

importing in it, those ravishing fallies of pleasure and delight, which an apostle stiles, "Joy unspeakable, and full of glory;" which are only indulged in some happy moments, and on special occasions. Let us begin with the first.

IT is true, his heart is contrite; and rivers of waters have been known to run down his eyes; in so much, that superficial spectators may take him for a man of sorrows; a gloomy, melancholy creature. But could they look into his heart, they would find it full of the oil of gladness; even when his eyes are full of the tears of sorrow. The smile of God from without; of conscience from within; cannot fail to inspire him with such cheering tranquillity, as could not possibly  
result



result merely from the most excellent temperature of body, or the most easy circumstances of this world. He thankfully receives the gifts of providence; tastes in them that the Lord is good: but chiefly he rejoices in the word of the truth of the gospel; and that his name is written in heaven; that God is his Father, Christ his Saviour, and heaven his inheritance. Be it so, that sometimes, through the agency of wicked and melancholy spirits without, and the too great prevalence of unbelief within, he gives too much way to a desponding frame: he very well knows, that it is neither acceptable to God; glorifying to Christ; pleasing to the Spirit; honouring to the gospel; edifying to his neighbour; or beneficial to his own soul. Ask you

the cordials that cheer his drooping spirits? He meditates on God; and rejoices under the shadow of his wings. He reads his Bible; and finds it the joy of his heart. He mortifies every known sin. He pours out unto God the sorrows of his heart. His countenance is no more sad. For God is favourable unto him, and he will see his face with joy.

SUCH is the habitual serenity of mind he studies to maintain. Such are the means by which it is promoted. But in some blessed periods of his life; some happy days which the Lord has made; his joy, like a river swelled by impetuous rains, bursts all its banks and carries all before it; at once the joys, at once the sorrows  
of

of the world. When he obtains the most comfortable intimations of the divine favour; of his interest in the Redeemer; and of his title to the heavenly inheritance: O then, how his heart exults! how his countenance looks cheerful! how the voice of melody is heard in his tabernacle! Now every object is fit to fill his mind with highest rapture. Every perfection of the divine nature; every purpose of his will; every sentence of his word; every operation of his hand; every privilege of his covenant, whether in hand or hope; is a well of salvation, out of which he draws water with joy. The birds mend their notes; the sun his beams; the outgoings of the morning and evening are made more joyful. All sorrow is turned into joy before him. E-  
very

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very defart rejoices. Every wilder-  
ness blossoms as the rose. Every  
mountain of discouragement skips  
like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like  
a young unicorn. Every cloud is  
stamped with a rainbow. Death  
loses his dart; the grave lays aside  
her gloom; and hell her chosen  
terrors.

GREAT is the joy of the bride-  
groom, when he is put in the posses-  
sion of his fair one: of the mo-  
ther, when her pangs are over, and  
a man-child is born into the world:  
of the husbandman, when the la-  
bours of the year are finished, and  
his barns filled with plenty: of the  
soldier, when a happy victory puts  
an end to the fatigues of a tedious  
campaign. But what is the joy of  
the bridegroom? What is the joy  
of



of the child-bearing woman? What is the joy of harvest? And what is the joy of them that find great spoil? What are any; what are all these joys, to the joy of him that rejoices in the Lord, and is glad in the God of his salvation? For who can tell what is included in the epithet of it given by a blessed apostle, "Unspeakable, and full of glory?" If such, O Lord, are the first-fruits; what must be the harvest of that light which is sown for the righteous, and gladness which is sown for the upright in heart? If in this vale of tears, thy favourite ones so greatly rejoice; who can conceive what is prepared for them, in that state when they shall come into thy beatific presence; where there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore?

*On*

*On pleasure.*

**N**OR is the Christian's claim to pleasure less apparent. For, first, he only knows to taste the sweetness of his lawful comforts; and to enjoy those satisfactions, that are common to his neighbour and himself. Who is it that makes the best of the world? The man of pleasure, who wallows in sensuality? Alas! he does not use the world, but abuses it. Fond as he seems, he but condemns his joys to death. His head is sick; his heart is faint. Is it any wonder his flesh abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat? Poor man! he pines even in the midst of plenty. For though his nerves should be braced with strength,

strength, and health should wanton in his veins; yet is his soul but sickly and consumptive. Hence weariness of time: hence impatience of thought: hence listless inability: hence variable inconstancy; dark cares; and heaving sighs, fetched from the bottom of the heart. Though all surrounding objects should wear a face of pleasure, and seem fit to inspire every joy unto the heart; it is all in vain. He desires to have, but he cannot obtain. He obtains, but his hopes are frustrated. Real enjoyment he is a stranger unto. For he tastes not, that God is good, in his earthly delights; and finds them but empty husks. Not so, he that enjoys God in his inferior enjoyments. To him the spring wears a more beauteous face; the sun shines with

a more pleasing light; the tulip assumes a deeper dye; and the rose, a more fragrant smell. I make no doubt but the poor beggar Lazarus in the parable, who lay at the gate of the proud and wealthy finner, (whose name is buried in oblivion); might taste more exquisite delight, in his scanty crumbs, and in healing tongues of the dogs; than the un pitying miser, in all his delicious fare.

BUT there are pleasures appropriated to the true Christian; joys which no stranger intermeddles with, in the exercise of pure and undefiled religion; which is not only a heightener of other delights, but is itself the greatest of any. Even as the sun imparts a brightness to every other object, and is himself



himself the brightest of all. Whether he contemplates the delightful truths, and ravishing mysteries, of the gospel; the banquet of the mind, sweeter than all honey:-----or practises spiritual duties towards his neighbour, or his God; when he prays with fervent supplication, or praises with joyful lips, or hears in his lovely tabernacles what God the Lord will say, or relieves the indigent for his Redeemer's sake, and comforts the distressed:---or exercises Christian graces; be it faith, that is attended with joy unspeakable; or love, that is its own reward, and the fulfilling of the law; or hope, that anticipates the joys above, in blissful expectation, the surest anchor of the soul:-----or mortifies fleshly lusts:-----or resists temptations, triumphing over them with Christian

magnanimity:----or endures afflictions, with a becoming patience, and cheerful resignation:----he tastes more solid pleasures than ever sensualist could boast. Pleasures, that are true in their fruition, fully answering the most sanguine expectation. Pleasures, whose repetition does not cloy; and their continuance is not clogged with satiety. Pleasures, whose review fills not the cheek with blushing; being honourable and glorious as the immortal soul, and pure as the joys of angels. Pleasures, whose consequences are not dangerous---to the body, by wasting its beauty, or preying on its health;---to the reputation, by fixing upon it an indelible stain;-----to the estate, by making a shipwreck of it in the abhorred gulph of prodigality.--Especially

cially not dangerous to the soul, by darkening the mind, fattening the heart, searing the conscience, and exposing to eternal vengeance. Pleasures, whose duration is not short; that can live in the winter of adversity, illuminate the valley of death, and pass into eternity.

He that is acquainted with them, may leave unto the guilty adulterer his impure thoughts, his wanton looks, and his abominable works; at which the midnight veils her face, and the morning blushes.----- May leave unto the beastly drunkard his flowing bowl, his sparkling wine, his wo and sorrow, his babbling, his redness of eyes, his wounds without cause.----- May leave unto the cursed swearer his bloody oaths; which neither gratify the sense,

nor afford the least equivalent to countervail the damnation of the soul.-----May leave to all the sons of sensuality, who count it pleasure to riot in the day-time, their consumed flesh, their sunk reputation, their beggared fortune, their darkened understanding, their seared conscience. Seared, did I say? See there that miserable wretch, extended on the bed of death, who lived in pleasure on the earth, and lulled his conscience asleep by a thousand opiates: but now refreshed with her long slumber, she awakes; and as a giant refreshed with wine, she cries, she roars, she lifts up her voice like a trumpet. The astonished soul hears and trembles. While sin and sickness, a dreadful pair, join their forces, assaulting at once his body and his soul; where, O where



where shall he flee for help? He perceives his dreadful mistake, but cannot deliver his own soul. In all the agony of hopeless despair, he resigns his vital breath; and dies without wisdom. If another of these brethren in iniquity remains, even to the last, a stranger to remorse; yet poor is the alleviation of his misery, that he never lifts up his eyes, till he is in hell, being in torments. Ah then! what avails him those fleeting joys of sense, which though of short continuance, must now be expiated with everlasting pain!

*On affliction and consolation.*

MANY are the afflictions of the righteous, and griefs on every side. Hear how an eminent apostle

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cries,

cries, "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death!" And another extraordinary saint, "I am the man that have seen affliction." Into what deeps they are often plunged by sin, that worst of evils! Shall I speak of the sin that easily besets them; their predominant corruption, which can no more be vanquished, than the Israelites could drive out the Canaanites, dreadful with chariots of iron? What sighs it fetches from the bottom of their heart! Not to mention the trouble occasioned by scandalous outbreakings; which waste the conscience, and might be distressful even to an unrenewed mind, from which the saints themselves are not exempted: there are provocations, which others think of trifling nature, that wear a grisly aspect

aspect in the eyes of the tender-hearted Christian. When manifestations are abused; opportunities neglected; admonitions despised; convictions stifled; mercies and judgments not improved; how do they walk mournfully before the Lord of hosts! It is true, the law cannot condemn them any more; yet still it can convince and reprove. When Moses was old, and stricken in years, his eye waxed not dim, his force was not abated. His law, though old, loses nothing of its severity. Sometimes they go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy of their salvation; and the Comforter that should relieve their souls is far away. How frequently they are under the frowns of providence! And though nothing seems to befall them but what is common

common unto men, the wormwood and the gall of their affliction is not obvious unto the eye of the world. Perhaps they are living too much under the power of some particular corruption; or some past iniquity is presented to them anew in all its horrid aggravations. Their flesh trembleth because of him, and they are afraid of his judgments. Comest thou peaceably, O Lord, in this thy visitation? "Art thou come  
" to bring my sin to remembrance,  
" and to slay my son?" said the widow of Zarephath. "We are  
" verily guilty concerning our brother," said the distressed patriarchs. Nor is their adversary the devil for ordinary idle on such occasions of temptation. Intangled in the wilderness, like Israel; the devil, like Pharaoh, resolves to pursue  
fue



sue them, and to revenge himself upon them. But who can enumerate all their sorrows?

IN such circumstances of distress, what healing hand shall pour the balm of peace? To comfort the heart, is more than to make a world, said the holy and tempted Luther. Consolation is a commodity of heaven, not to be imported but from the distant country of Immanuel. It is God alone, the God of peace, to whom almighty power belongeth, that can comfort the soul. He it is whom an inspired writer stiles the God of all consolations, and the God who comforteth them that are cast down. The Father is he who loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation. The Son is the consolation of Israel; the Prince of peace; and

and the true Noah, who comforts us concerning the work of our hands. For this end he became a man of sorrows, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him. But eminently the Holy Ghost is the Comforter, who, like the dove of Noah's, flies with the olive-branch of peace, to assure us the winter is past, and the rain is over and gone. Ministers are indeed the helpers of your joy; but it is God who wipes off all tears from off all faces.

WHATSOEVER was written aforetime, was written for our instruction, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. For this the Old, and for this the New Testament was written, that like two breasts of consolation, they might be sucked by

by the humble and contrite ones. But you are unable to lay hold upon a promise: lo, there is an attribute of God, an office of Christ; endeavour from thence to derive your consolation.

O YE heirs of the promise! what strong consolation is allotted for you by your heavenly Father! What divine peace; what unspeakable joy; what full assurance may you attain! Even in your godly sorrow, you taste most sweet refreshment, while you can say of laughter, It is mad. Rivers of waters did run down the eyes of the sweet singer of Israel; and the spirit of mourning is the spirit of consolation also. While here, you tread the vale of tears; but with your rods, you have the hidden manna, which the world knoweth

knoweth not of. Ye cannot indeed be assured of a perpetual triumph. Yet may your peace stand firm with God, while you have none from Satan, and in the world tribulation. But, O ye children of the King! why should you be sad from day to day? Will the King of heaven be pleased with you to sit in sackcloth in his gate? Is he an austere Master, who grudges at your welfare? Your Head is now a man of joy, as once he was a man of sorrows; and shall not ye rejoice with him, who are the body of Christ, and members in particular? Grieve not the Holy Spirit by your dejected sorrow, who is the oil of gladness, and he who seals you to the day of redemption. Give not place to the devil, that melancholy spirit, who being himself condemned to feed on dust, sore envies



vies you your hidden manna ; for we are not ignorant of his devices. What flaming Christians might you be, who are now like the smoking flax? What lofty cedars, who now only resemble the bruised reed, because you are not careful to serve the Lord with gladness? For the joy of the Lord is your strength. "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and again, I say, Rejoice."

YE afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted; that walk in darkness, and have no light; consider how the husbandman, when he commits to the furrows of the field his grain, the hopes of the ensuing year; he waiteth long, and hath great patience for it, till he receive the early and the latter rain. So, just so, "light is sown for the  
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“righteous, and gladness for the  
“upright in heart.”

SOME comfort themselves with their lusts; some with their worldly possessions; the more refined moralists with their duties. But, O ye sons of men, how long will ye love vanities? How soon will your springs be dried up, that are not supplied from the fountain of living waters? As the flower of the grass, your comforts shall perish; and as the gourd of Jonah shall they fade away, in the time of your greatest need. Especially ye who think to spin out of your bowels a robe of righteousness, to screen you from the angry vengeance of God, and pacify your consciences with duties of your own; but despise the everlasting righteousness of the Redeemer;

er; know that your hope shall be like the spider's web. Whereas the real Christian, like the lilies of the field, he toils not, he spins; yet far outshines Solomon in all his glory; far excels the busy legalist, when vested with his most pompous performances.

Wo to you, rich men, who trust in your hoarded heaps; for ye have received your consolation. All ye that rejoice in iniquity, let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Alas! your flashy mirth will never bid you smile at death, nor turn your eye undaunted on the grave. And what will you do in the awful judgment, when God will laugh at your calamity; and the merciful Mediator afford you no relief? "Because

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“when I called, ye refused; and when  
“I stretched out my hands, ye would  
“not regard.” Wherewith shall we  
comfort you, who are strangers to  
the consolation of Israel? This is  
the childrens bread, and dogs must  
not partake. A precious oil it is,  
no vessel but the contrite heart can  
hold. We will not put this new  
wine into old bottles, but into  
new bottles, that both may be pre-  
served.

WHEN others take up the tim-  
brel and harp, and rejoice at the  
found of the organ; O heavenly  
word! be thou my consolation.  
And though weeping may endure  
for a night; yet with the rising day,  
my joy returns. A joy the world gives  
not, nor takes away. When every  
pleasurable enjoyment besides shall  
languish



*On looking at the things, &c. 137*

languish and expire ; this passes over into eternity, greatly triumphant over death and the grave. No more shall the countenance be sad, nor the eye dim with tears, when the ransomed of the Lord shall obtain joy and gladness, and sighing and sorrowing shall flee away.

*On looking at the things that are not seen.*

**H**E that looks at the things that are not seen, is a person who is endowed with a blessed and holy second-sight, by which he is distinguished from other men: and sees, not mournful objects, as coffins and corpses ; but such objects as are most cheering and delightful.

The eyes of his understanding are enlightened by the Holy Ghost, to know the things that the natural man perceiveth not; the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. Though the good and bad things of this vain world are always pressing on his senses; he is not chiefly influenced by them, as though they were the principal things. For the things above, and the things that are eternal, he judges to be no less real for their being invisible and distant; and unspeakably the most important of all other things. He firmly believes, frequently thinks of, highly esteems, ardently desires, earnestly expects, and diligently labours after the enjoyment of them. He bestows the cream of his thoughts in meditating upon them; and talks about

about them, not by constraint, when he is not able to avoid the discourse, but naturally, and with a ready mind.

SOME have thought him incapable of paying a sufficient attention to the necessary affairs of the world; as though one could not be fervent in spirit, without being slothful in business. But this is a vile slander. For moderate industry is not a diversion from serious religion, but a singular help unto it: and the spiritual man, who holds the plough, or handles the axe, is, even in these common actions, more holy than the carnal man in his most solemn devotions.

HE esteems a man much more because he is gracious, than because  
he

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he is rich ; and can never be induced to think, that proud finners are happy, though they be elevated to the very summit of fortune. He would much rather chuse to see his children deeply tinctured with the principles of true religion, than put in a condition to make a figure in this world. If he is in adversity, he derives not his comfort from earthly enjoyments, but eternal things: these are the hills to which he lifts his eyes, and from whence cometh his aid. If he is in prosperity, his earthly blessings are not the chief source of his joy and happiness ; but in this he rejoices, that his name is written in heaven.

As he who ascends a high mountain, and from its top surveys the plains below, will think large fields  
but



but inconsiderable spots of land; so he who is set on these high places of eternity, and converses much with everlasting things, will regard, in a very diminutive light, the most important businesses of this transitory life. His mind acquires a sublime turn, and an elevated way of thinking, not to be easily taken with slight and trifling vanities.

By this blessed temper of mind, he is habitually disposed to perform spiritual duties; the frown is struck from the brow of death; his mind is strongly fortified against afflictions of every sort; and the edge of all temptations is most effectually blunted. Having obtained a view of that ineffably glorious prize of the high calling of God, he cannot

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not possibly think any pains too great to reach it. For this he can instantly serve God day and night. For this he can both labour and suffer reproach; take joyfully the spoiling of his goods; and sometimes even resign his breath in cruel flames. In vain does this present world spread her blandishments, and arm her face with frowns, to shake his steady purpose, who looks not at the things that are seen. What though the advantages of the world are present, and the advantages of religion are, in great measure, future: yet this wise and enlightened soul is at no loss which he should prefer. For an eternal advantage, that will certainly come, is far to be preferred to a present one, that is of short duration. O faith, it is thine to realize and render present  
the

the things that are invifible to the corporeal eye ; whether by reason of the nature of the things themfelves, or by reason of their diftance from us in time and place. By thee infpired, we can chufe the fharpelt afflictions before the moft poignant pleasures ; and efteem the moft grievous reproaches, greater riches than the peculiar treasure of moft wealthy kings.

*On Christian hope.*

LET us attend firft unto thofe glorious objects at which the throws a wifhful eye. Thefe are not the fading honours ; the tranfitory pleasures ; or the uncertain riches of this world ; but what infinitely excels them all, the things that are not feen, that are eternal. All that

that is contained in the vast mines of the promise, and in the bowels of a Redeemer's righteousness, which is like the great mountains; all that is comprehended under that most emphatical word, SALVATION; final perseverance in grace here, and everlasting joys hereafter; are the blessings she teaches the Christian to wait for. Though surrounded with formidable enemies, he is persuaded they shall not separate him from the love of Christ; and checks every distrustful thought. "Hope thou in God, "my soul," he says; "for I shall yet praise him." If he takes a solitary walk in the church-yard, and views the silent graves, and mouldering bones; and considering his latter end, recollects how soon even his bones shall be dry, and  
for



for his part he shall be cut off: though headlong sense, and unenlightened reason, would suggest, that man lieth down, and awaketh not again; though there is hope of a tree when it is cut down; he sees with joyful heart the prisoners of the earth emerging from their long confinement; and with joyful lips, he utters that most blissful expectation; "Thou wilt shew the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore."

WHILST he thus anticipates the joys above, his towering hopes are not supported by the sand. For God, and Christ, and every smiling promise, is his foundation. But chiefly, he is begotten again to this lively hope, by thy resurrection,

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blessed

bleſſed Jeſus. Thou art the Rock on which he caſts this anchor. And ſhall I call the faithful promiſes of the word, the cables that ſecure it? He ſhuns alike the abhorred gulph of deſpair; and the dangerous rock of preſumption, infamous for ſhipwrecks. And by the gentle breathings of the heavenly wind, he is waſted at length into the fair havens of life and immortality.

WHAT ſtorms of adverſity will he not defy, having this hope as an anchor of the ſoul? What fight of afflictions can he not endure, defended by this impenetrable helmet? whiſt he poiſes the exceeding great and eternal weight of glory, againſt his light and momentary ſufferings; againſt the ſpoiling of his goods, the better  
and

and enduring substance? If for the hope of Israel he is bound in a chain, he glories in his fetters. Amid the ocean of eternal delights, sunk are the sorrows of the world; as in a sea of honey, a drop of vinegar is swallowed up and lost.

ANIMATED by this same grace, he stirs up himself in every duty; and is not slothful in the business of his salvation. Whilst he hopes for thy salvation, O God, he does thy commandments. The bringing in of this best hope, strengthens his weak hands, and confirms his feeble knees.

How greatly he disdains to wallow in the puddle of sin! The darts of temptation fall ineffectual to the ground. In danger he is

N 2                      courageous;

courageous; in sorrow he is moderate; in duty he is diligent; in tribulation he is patient; and even in death he smiles.

*On the vain hopes of the hypocrite.*

O THE vain and presumptuous hopes of sinners! You inherit the kingdom of heaven! You ascend into the hill of the Lord! You enter into the heavenly Canaan, and inherit his holy mountain! Who are unrighteous:----who are of an Egyptian nature, hankering after the onions and the garlic:----whose hands are not clean:----whose hearts are not pure:----who are alienated from the divine life:----who are drenched in sensuality:----who are estranged from the womb:----who  
say



say to the Almighty, Depart from us:-----whose carnal minds are enmity against God;---never formed for himself;-----never made meet to be partakers of the undefiled inheritance;---never wrought for this self-same thing. Go seek a Mahometan paradise. Christianity affords you no ground of hope. These pure regions of blessedness will eternally exclude you from their blessed abodes. Ye grovelling sons of earth, who never deemed yourselves strangers and pilgrims here; who embrace the dunghill of this world as your portion; how can the eternal Majesty but be ashamed to call himself your God? How can his heart be towards you? How can he make you cleave unto himself as the girdle to the loins of a man? Go reconcile

light with darkness. Bid fire and water meet in mutual embraces. Then may righteousness and unrighteousness have fellowship together. Then may Christ and Belial agree. Then may evil dwell with God, and the foolish stand in his presence.

MAKE the absurd and impossible supposition, that the eternal Sovereign should reverse his high decree:-----should bely his faithful word, and rescind his threatening:-----or, which is all one thing, should set open unto you the doors of paradise, and admit you into that place of blessedness: yet where could you fly from the guilt of your consciences? where from the carnality of your heart?

WHERE

WHERE from the guilt of your consciences? If you ascend heaven, lo! it is there; as well as though you made your bed in hell. How couldst thou hold up thy ashamed countenance towards his awful face? Would not his pure eyes flash confusion upon you, and strike you through with a dart, when you touched this mountain of his holiness?

BUT though thy conscience, O wicked man, were supposed to be as secure then, as now it is; still happiness is far removed from thee. For who will reconcile thy carnal heart to the spirituality of heavenly joys?

O YE delightful mansions of the blessed, how would your charms be lost on him, whose soul within him  
were

were full of sin, the abomination  
that maketh desolate!

WHAT consolation could he find  
in the society of the heavenly inhabitants? There are the holy angels. There are the spirits of the just, escaped from a sinful and vain world. There are the general assembly and church of the first-born. You never loved them here. You despised and hated them, when their holiness was but imperfect. You hated and despised them for the sake of their holiness. How can you take pleasure in their company, when they are perfectly like HIM?

NOR would the employment of  
the redeemed conduce one whit  
more to thy happiness, O un sancti-  
fied soul! How couldst thou dwell  
with



with ever new delight, in the contemplation of that God, who was not in all thy thoughts?----Of that Redeemer, who was despised and rejected by thee?----Of these awful mysteries, which were never revealed unto thee in their native sweetness and glory? How couldst thou join in the song of salvation, when the voice of melody was never heard in thy dwelling; and praise in thy lips was never comely?

BE merciful, O God, to miserable sinners. Rouse them from their slumber. Awaken them from their delirious dreams of happiness hereafter, without a present participation of thy divine nature. O gracious God, enlighten their eyes; convince them of their fond delusion, before thou vindicate thy  
own

154 *The character of a hypocrite.*

own holiness and truth with fiery indignation. For "thou art not  
" a God that hast pleasure in  
" wickedness, neither shall evil  
" dwell with thee: the foolish  
" shall not stand in thy sight.  
" Thou hatest all workers of iniquity. Thou wilt destroy them  
" that speak leasing. Thou, Lord,  
" will abhor the bloody and deceitful man."

*The character of a hypocrite.*

**H**E is a pretender to those good qualifications, of which he is really destitute; and a dissembler of those vices which he secretly practises. He is that in the church, which a knave is in the state. The  
one

one is not fit for civil society; nor the other for Christian communion. Were he to appear in his real colours, men would clap their hands at him, and hiss him out of his place. Therefore he paints his face, like Jezebel, with the varnish of goodly words, of sanctified looks, of actions seeming benevolent and devout. He prays with great fluency of expression; you would think him an angel for fervency and rapture; but it is only in the presence of others. And though his words are flaming, his heart is ice. He gives alms indeed, but must always take witnesses upon it. He is very punctual in going to church, where he seats himself in some remarkable corner, in order to attract all eyes upon himself. He seems to be all attention and composure: he lifts up his hands  
and

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and eyes in a religious manner ; or covers his face ; or heaves a sigh ; or sends forth a groan. O how mightily he is impressed with the sermon, if you believe his face ; while, in the mean while, he is indulging his lusts, and his heart going out after his covetousness ! When he fasts, he assumes a sorrowful air, and a disfigured face ; and is grieved for sin as much as the bulrush when it hangs the head. When he is in religious company, he talks of his experience ; the plagues of his heart ; and complains of the great decay of religion in the day. He is a most uncharitable censurer of others, while he practises far greater villainies himself. All his religion, at least the greatest part of it, is left behind him in the temple, or in the street ; for he neither carries it to  
his



his family, nor to his closet. He is like the rainbow, whose glorious colours are reflected from a dark vapour, only when the sun shines. Notwithstanding his ostentation, he hates the light; and refuses to come into it, except when his mask is on. He cannot endure a minister, who rakes into his conscience; nor a Christian friend, who gives him faithful admonition. When he is reproved for any miscarriage, he says to the reprover, It is none of your business; meddle with your own matters. Were it not for his eager desire of applause from men, and the roaring of his angry conscience; he would bid adieu to all the duties of religion, whether private or public. His most admired and pompous services can find no acceptance with God; and his most

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fervent devotions are no more regarded, than if they were the howlings of a dog. What is all his religion, but like the kifs of Judas, or the bowing of the knee by the crucifiers of the Lord of glory? He makes God an idol; and considers the creature like a Deity, whom he worships and serves more than the Creator. He is like a grave, which may be covered by a white sepulchral stone of polished marble, and engraven with some lying panegyric for an epitaph; but within a ghastly corpse presents itself to your eye, or noisome stench offends the nostril. The longer you grow in his acquaintance, your respect for him will lessen; and at length, perhaps, will turn to a just hatred and aversion. For he is sometimes  
discerned

discerned and despised by men ; but  
always by God.

*The character of a sincere Christian.*

HE is one who needs not affect  
to appear in a character fo-  
reign to himself ; nor to conceal  
that character which really agrees  
to him. He studies to approve  
himself to God ; and does not  
value himself upon the applause of  
men. Fame and reputation is a  
thing he will not court, but will  
deserve it. He will not hunt after  
it, but it will follow him through  
deepest shades. His real glory is  
not obvious to any eye, but the pe-  
netrating eye of God ; who delights  
in him, approves him, and com-

mends him. When he prays, he pours out his heart ; when he praises, he makes melody in his heart unto the Lord. And his heart is bigger than his words. He is not an enemy to public religion ; but secret devotion is an essential part of his happiness. He not only mourns over those sins which himself has committed, as Ahab did ; but he laments for the sins of others, of which he is personally innocent ; like Christ, who wept over the sins of Jerusalem, though himself knew no sin. He indeed regards every the smallest precept of the law ; but when he tithes mint, annise, and cummin, he neglects not the weightier matters. He is not for dividing religion, like the pretended mother of the child, who thereby evidenced she had no interest in  
the



the babe. Though he has the remainders of sin in him, hypocrisy not excepted, he has not a heart and a heart, nor is he a monster with a double mind. His religion is not the fulsome compliments of a well-bred gentleman, who is your humble servant, glad of your welfare, and extremely sorry for your slightest inconvenience; but like the tender affection of an ingenuous friend. As the beauty of Absalom surpassed the daubings of Jezebel; so does the holiness of the sincere Christian excel the painting of the hypocrite. He is not like a smoky chimney, with a marble frontispiece; nor like a rotten grave, with a marble monument: but like a mountain replete with precious ore, while, perhaps, the surface is barren and unsightly. He does not want

to bring down the word of God to his private inclinations; but is desirous of bringing his private inclinations to be judged by the law and the testimony. He is not ashamed to own, that he was once in an error; nor afraid to know the worst about himself: but, on the contrary, it is the language of his heart, "What I know not, teach thou me." Though he is far from ostentation on the one hand, and prudent enough not to blaze abroad his secret faults on the other; yet he loves to come into the light; and needs not be ashamed, though all the world were a sun. Though he should not, with Balaam, build seven altars, and offer up a bullock and a ram on every one; but, like Abraham, content himself with one altar, and a single victim; yet is  
his

his sacrifice accepted. His turtle-doves, and young pigeons, are no less grateful than thousands of rams. Silk and purple, and even goats hair, for the service of the sanctuary, are not despised of the Lord; when his circumstances cannot afford precious stones and gold. His inward groans, his secret sighs, are a powerful rhetoric, effectual and fervent. He puts their tears in a bottle; and a cup of cold water, given to a thirsty disciple, shall not lose its reward. His rejoicing is the testimony of his conscience, when he hears the scorning of the people. Death, with all his grisly features, cannot stare him out of countenance; and he needs not be afraid in the awful judgment. Though, like Josiah, he should die  
in

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in battle; yet he comes to his grave in peace.

*On Christian prudence.*

THERE is a prudence which is so essential to the being of a Christian, that it is but another name for that faith by which he lives. He that is wise unto salvation; he that knows thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent; he that is instructed in the kingdom of heaven, to understand the truths he should believe, the duties he should practise, and the happiness he should pursue; he--- he is a prudent man, though he should be neither a wise œconomist in matters of this world, a plodding statesman, not a cunning artificer.



tificer. For his God doth instruct him to discretion; and though a fool, in his own and others opinion, he errs not in the way of holiness.

BUT there is a prudence of a much narrower kind; which, if it be not essential, is highly ornamental to the Christian in the whole tenor of his life. By this he does not so much avoid immoralities, as improprieties of behaviour; which though they should not make him guilty in the eye of God, would, notwithstanding, render him contemptible among men. In him the wisdom of the serpent is happily married with the simplicity of the dove; whilst he defends himself from the injuries of the world, without incurring the guilt of being himself injurious.

THERE

THERE is not perhaps any one description that comprehends more of his real character, than this, that "his heart discerns both time and judgment." It is a maxim worthy to drop from the pen of the wisest of all men, that "for every thing there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven." This excellent precept he well understands, as knowing, that let an action be ever so good, if it is misplaced, and thrown out of its due order, it gathers an awkwardness, and exposes to contempt.

HHE knows when to be serious, and when to be cheerful;----when to be zealous, and when to be moderate;---when to be deliberate, and when to be hasty;----when to be singular, and when to be conformed;  
ed;

ed;----when to speak, and when to refrain from speaking;----when to reprove, and when to commend;----when to give, and when to with-hold;----and never can, with a good grace, become the object of contempt and derision.

FOR by this prudent timing of every word and action, he appears to every impartial spectator serious, but not dumpish;----cheerful, yet not frothy;----zealous, yet not fiery;----moderate, but not lax;----deliberate, but not lazy;----active, but not rash;----singular, but not nice;----courteous, but not cringing;----noble, but not proud;----frugal, but not covetous;----devout, but not superstitious;----resigned, but not negligent;----fixed, but not dogmatical;----liberal, but not prodigal.

digal. He speaks, but he is not talkative. He keeps silence, but he is not fullen. He reproveth, but he breaks not the head. He commends, but he puffs not up. His words are few, but they are as goads, and as nails fastened in a sure place. Sometimes indeed he may be betrayed into an improper action, when he trusts too much to his own understanding, or gives the reins to his unruly passions; than which there are no greater adversaries to prudence of every kind. But he improves even by his blunders, whilst with shame he recollects them, and resolves against the like failures in time coming. He searches the scriptures, which can give even to the young man knowledge and discretion. He mortifies his lusts, and moderates his  
his



his passions. He maintains a life of communion with God. Therefore shall he guide his affairs with discretion unto the end: therefore shall he deal prudently; he shall be extolled, and be very high. Good men shall rejoice to see none occasion of stumbling in him: and they that desire occasion, shall be ashamed, because it is cut off. Go thou and do likewise.

*On Christian diligence.*

THE diligent Christian is a person who looks upon time as the most invaluable of all treasures, and upon the salvation of his soul as the most interesting business of life. He assigns not the dregs of

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his

his time to the exercises of devotion, while the flower of it is dedicated unto the pursuit of worldly employments: but he serves God with the best he can afford. He does not say unto the duties of religion, as the partial Christians of the apostle James said to the poor man in vile raiment, when he came into their assembly, Stand ye there, or, Sit here under my footstool; while the duties of his civil calling are invited, with the man that wears the gold ring, and gay cloathing, to sit in a good place. He seeks first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and other things can only claim a secondary care. Like Solomon, he first builds the house of God, and then his own house. As the shekel of the sanctuary was double to the common shekel; so,  
in

in the matters of eternity, he doubles the diligence that he uses in the matters of time. Religion is not his by-work, nor a matter of mere amusement, which he may, or may not attend unto, as he pleases. He knows that in all labour there is profit; and that neither the blessings of providence nor grace will fall into the mouth of the yawning sluggard.-----Dost thou not see, O my soul, with what incessant toil the children of men acquire their worldly riches? what dangers they defy? what difficulties they surmount? with what laborious efforts they hew out to themselves broken cisterns, that can hold no water? They put forth their hand upon the rock, and overturn the very mountains. They are not afraid of killing damps, nor overflowing floods,

that their eye may see every precious thing. And shall I not much more give diligence, to obtain the prize of my high calling, which cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, the precious onyx, or the sapphire? How is he filled with conscious shame at such a thought! that worldly vanities appear with more attractive charms in the eyes of worldly men, than the things above in his eyes; and should inspire them with greater ardour to obtain them! But especially when he considers the shame, the pain, the sorrow, and the unknown agonies of the Redeemer, to compass our salvation; he can no more regard it as a matter of indifferency, that cost the Saviour so dear. Did he think my salvation worthy of so much blood? and shall I think it worthy of no more



more but a few languid endeavours, slothful wishes, lazy desires? He looks upon no time as incapable of religious improvement. Even the seasons of worldly avocations are sometimes blessed seasons of intercourse with Heaven. As the image of Cesar was instamped upon the smallest coin, as well as the greatest; so the beauty of the Lord his God is stamped upon the minutest actions of life, and establishes every work of his hand. Holiness, like a beautiful and shining varnish, spread over the colourings of a picture, imparts a heavenly lustre to his whole conversation. Instead of contriving excuses to blunt the edge of the precept, and still the clamours of his own conscience, when called to any necessary duty, he opens his mouth, and pants for God's

commandments. He leaps upon the mountains, and skips over the hills of difficulty. He esteems every day lost in which he has done nothing for the glory of God, the edification of his neighbour, or his own salvation. The time which is employed by others in vain jangling, and the canvassing of idle controversies, he bestows upon the mortifying of his earthly affections, and holding fellowship with God. When engaged in prayer, or any holy duty, he puts a holy constraint upon the backward flesh; he rallies his wandering thoughts; awakens his drowsy powers; and takes, as it were, by violence the kingdom of heaven. He considers no attainment of religion as fit to be rested in; and in the matters of salvation, he makes exception to the rule, "Be content  
" with

“ with such things as you have.”  
When old age shall clothe his head  
in snow, and furrow his face with  
wrinkles, the retrospect of his past  
life will not resemble a barren and  
unsightly desert, but a cultivated  
garden. He is a credit to the reli-  
gion he professes; and, in some good  
measure, by his edifying life, and  
confirming conversation, supplies  
the want of miracles. But though  
he works out his own salvation  
with fear and trembling, it is not  
by his own strength; nor does he  
look upon his diligence, however  
great, as meritorious of eternal life.  
For as Christ hath wrought all his  
works for him; so it is God that  
worketh in him both to will and to  
do of his good pleasure.

*On*

*On slothfulness; or, The Christian  
stirred up to diligence and activity.*

**O**PEN thy drowsy eyes, thou yawning sluggard: spring from thy lazy couch, on which thou turnest, like the creaking door upon the hinges. Is eternity nothing? Are heavenly joys of such a trifling nature; are hellish torments so easy to be endured; that faint endeavours, languid resolutions, empty desires, are a sufficient method to lay hold upon the one, and to avoid the other?

SEE with what unwearied diligence the children of this world prosecute their temporary interests.  
They



They rise up early ; they sit up late ; they eat the bread of sorrow. For what ? To acquire either the necessities, or the superfluities, of this present transitory life : whether their taste be riches, or honour, or pleasure. What hardships will the seafaring man refuse to undergo, upon the howling waste of waters, animated with the prospect of heaping up silver as the dust ? They are not deterred from their steady purpose, though you should represent unto them, in liveliest images, the chosen terrors of the great deep ; though you should remind them of the roaring tempest, the treacherous rock, or latent quicksands dreadful to ships, they are not discouraged. They despise the southern heat, and northern cold. They regard not the labours of the day, nor the  
watchings

watchings of the night. Shall we mention next, the incredible fatigues of the campaign, while the soldier pursues his way to fame and glory, through troops of hostile spears, regardless of the fierce countenances of the enemy, the flashing of the swords, and the thunder of the roaring engines, which spread desolation all before them? With what amazing activity; with what intense application, are the intrigues of statesmen planned and executed; while they seek for glory, honour, and immortality! Alas! shall these be wiser in their generation in matters of time, than the professed children of light in matters of eternity?

BUT dart your eyes down to the centre; to those accursed spirits who dwell in darkness, and are punished  
with

with an everlasting destruction ; (for even an enemy may thus befriend us with instruction) : with what vigilance they work in the children of disobedience ! with what diligence they exert themselves in dishonouring of God ; in destruction of men ; while they traverse the earth in quest of mischief ; as the hungry lion paces the desert round and round, if haply he can find a beast of chace, whom he may devour !

THROW next your eyes towards these happy regions where angels reside ; and where the spirits of the just made perfect eternally reap the fruits of their Redeemer's purchase. With what alacrity they do his will ! Swift as the lightning's glimpe they run ; they fly. Hear how

how they swell the note in the triumphant song of Moses and the Lamb! How nimbly they touch the vocal strings! Both day and night they persevere in their exalted exercise; while they serve him, with utmost ardour, in the temple of the skies.

BUT though the rational creation were dumb, the inanimate creation would cry out against the slothful Christian. The golden sun rejoices as a strong man to run a race; and calls you to run the race that is set. The silver-moon witnesses against you in the heavens, as she walks in brightness amidst the sparkling stars. All the rivers run into the sea, which constantly either ebbs or flows, but never stagnates in lazy slumbers;



slumbers; never fails to wash the shore with his returning tide.

THE God whom we serve is the living God. Away then with deadness and formality. "Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Creator of all the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary," in constantly upholding, by his all-powerful word, this universal frame of nature? The reins of government, whether in the natural or moral world, he never drops from his hand: but, by his powerful energy, directs their various motions, in such mysterious sort as his eternal wisdom did contrive. Shall man, that noble creature, the peculiar glory of whose nature is to wear the divine refem-

how they swell the note in the triumphant song of Moses and the Lamb! How nimbly they touch the vocal strings! Both day and night they persevere in their exalted exercise; while they serve him, with utmost ardour, in the temple of the skies.

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blance; to be the very image of his Maker; shall he so far degenerate from his all-perfect pattern, as to give up himself to lazy torpor, and shameful inactivity?

ALL beings in the circle of existence, from the high Creator unto the meanest creature, with one harmonious voice awake thee from thy slumber. Go to the ant; the little, the despicable, and yet laborious ant; consider her ways, O thou sluggard; her painful, prudent ways; consider of them, and be wise.

YE have the prophets and the apostles of the Lord for your examples. The noble company of martyrs, and all the sanctified ones who have gone before you; who have



have finished their course; who have fought the good fight; who have kept the faith; and now, through faith and patience, inherit the promises. But a greater than any faint or apostle, prophet, or martyr, is here. For consider the Apostle and High Priest of your profession, Christ Jesus; who not only inculcated by his doctrine an holy fervour and alacrity in matters of eternity, but exemplified it in his life. Arduous was his work, and difficult was his undertaking; yet he did not fail, nor was discouraged, till he could say, "It is finished." Had he been slothful, then we had been to us, here and hereafter. He went about doing good in the days of his humiliation. He suffered no day to pass, in which he did not accom-

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plish some part of the work which the Father gave him to do. Retired upon the solitary mountain, he prayed whole nights away. How fervently he addressed the throne of his Father! How pathetically he declared the name of God unto his brethren, while the listening crowds were lost in deep attention!

*On the improvement of time.*

**O** TIME, how short is thy continuance! how uncertain thy stay!

INDEED if we compare thee with the transitory fashions of this world, thy face is full of wrinkles, and thou art the oldest of things: yet  
art

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art thou but an infant in comparison of eternity past: yet art thou but a moment in comparison of eternity to come. Not many thousand years ago, the voice of the Almighty gave thee birth, when he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. Yet a little while, the voice of the archangel, and the last trumpeter's sound shall give thee death, and thou shalt be no more. But O how scanty is the share we have even in thy short duration! To us thou dwindlest down to threescore years and ten; nor can we assure ourselves even of this little span.

WHILE we, poor dreaming mortals, supinely yawn on our beds of sloth, forgetful of the difficult and necessary work of our salvation;

Q 3

thou

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thou holdest on thy unrelenting career, swifter than the weaver's shuttle, the nimble arrow, or the eagle that hasteth to her prey.

NONE ever heard the tread of thy nimble feet, nor the sounding of thy wings. Though men have given thee a tongue, and thou speakest not once or twice, but twenty times in a day; yet man perceiveth it not. We never remember, that the striking of the clock is the knell of our departed hours; and we say, with the sluggard, "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep."

COULD we recal thy steps; could we retrieve thy loss; perhaps our folly might admit some shadow of excuse. If our work might be accomplished



accomplished with the slightest application; and if we were not at all accountable for the improvement we make of this most precious talent; then might our shameful prodigality be a more pardonable error. But since all these hopes are the most foolish and chimerical which can possibly enter into human breasts, to what shall we ascribe our listless languor, but to the most desperate infatuation and stupidity?

HAPPY the man who has a heart given him to use this price put in his hand to get wisdom; and who is skilled in the holy merchandize of redeeming the time! There are two maxims to which, in the course of his life, he stedfastly adheres.

THE

188 *On the improvement of time.*

THE *first* is, That no space of time is to be left wholly blank and void, but every part of it ought to be filled up with doing good. He considers his time as an estate or track of ground, that ought to be diligently cultivated, or manured, and no parcel of it, though ever so barren, incapable of some improvement. He allows to the innocent demands of nature, for sleep and recreation, no more than is necessary to recruit its languishing powers. Every day he esteems as lost, which has not produced some action, that imports him as a rational and immortal creature, tending to promote either the glory of God, the good of his neighbour, or the salvation of his own soul. He does not content himself in being diligent merely in the business of his civil calling,

ing, but to his power he does good unto all men; if the ignorant are to be instructed;----if the unruly are to be warned;----if the weak are to be supported;----if the disconsolate are to be comforted;----if the needy are to be relieved;----if innocence is to be vindicated from unjust aspersions;----if mistaken prejudices are to be removed;----and angry passions soothed. But chiefly acts of devotion, hearing or reading the word, pouring out his heart in prayer to a reconciled God; these are his favourite employments, and the portions of time employed in them, the golden spots of his existence. A day in his courts, he esteems as better than a thousand.

THE *second* is, That no opportunity of time be suffered to slip.

As

As "to every thing there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven;" these opportunities he lays hold upon, as the calls of providence to do good, which will be quickly over and gone. In a word, he is hasty in beginning, and vigorous in pursuing every good work, and every laudable enterprise, but chiefly the work of his salvation. Every day he considers as a new life. He cares not so much how long time he lives in the world, as how well he employs it; as well knowing, that it is a prelude either to a joyful or a disconsolate eternity.

*The*



*The superior and distinguishing advantages of the Christian in this life.*

IT is true, there are beasts which excel us in bulk of stature, in perfection of sense, in vigour of nerves, in swiftness of their motion. The inhabitants of air are accommodated with wings; of water, with fins. What then? Are we not still the emperors of the world? Yes, we are. Reason asserts our superiority; and reduces the most fierce, the most unwieldy, the most untractable of the brutal kind, under our yoke. By reason we put bits in the horse's mouth; tame the elephant; conquer the lion. Birds and fishes are caught in their  
OWN

own elements, and served up to our tables. This heavenly gift maintains our glorious prerogative. We ascend where they dare not soar, and trace the paths of the stars. Nor are the goods of fortune, glory, learning, much unlike the qualifications of the irrational kind, when compared with the superior excellencies of true wisdom, goodness, and religion. Be it so; the Christian is not versant in mathematics; in history; in systems of philosophy; not a logician; not an orator. He never stormed a town, nor gained a victory. He has not what men call riches and honours. His cloaths are not besmeared with gold. He plows not half a country with his oxen. He is not addressed with the high and founding titles of your Lordship, and

and your Grace. He lives remote from courts and palaces, and is not surrounded with a numerous train of servants. The circle of his acquaintance is small. He lives not in the annals of time. He is not talked of among distant nations. But when he dies, he is forgotten. Yet let him not envy the great, the wealthy, the renowned; for if true riches; if glorious honours; if refined pleasures can make him blessed, he is a happy man. He is not learned: but he is wise in what imports him most to know, as an immortal creature; wise unto salvation. Behold his knowledge! For as the twinkling stars of night are eclipsed by the glorious star of day; so is the wisdom of the world, by that which cometh from above. He is not powerful: but he hath taken

194 *The superior advantages, &c.*

the kingdom of heaven by violence;  
laid hold on eternal life; and subdued his earthly affections. Behold the wonders of his might! He is not wealthy: but he is rich in faith; rich in hope: contentment is his natural wealth; he complains not of unsatisfied desires. Behold his riches! He is not honourable: but God is his Father; Christ his brother; angels his servants; righteousness is his garment; holiness his ornament; the cross is his coat of arms; heaven is his inheritance; Christian is his stile. Behold his dignity! He is not renowned: but God commends him; angels applaud him. His glory is not bounded by the stars; nor ended by the conflagration. Behold his fame! In bondage he is free; in poverty he is rich;



*On the Christian's perseverance. 195*

rich; in obscurity he is illustrious. Happy man! enjoy thyself in the possession of true felicity; while others hunt after the shadow, and weary themselves in vain.

*On the certainty of the Christian's perseverance in his happy state.*

"**F**EAR not, thou worm Jacob; I will help thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer, the holy One of Israel." O heavenly soul, who art redeemed not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ; who art sanctified of God the Father; whose faith, however weak, is yet unfeigned; know, to thy unspeakable comfort, no more thou shalt become a child

196 *On the Christian's perseverance.*

of wrath, or slave of sin. No; sooner shall the mountains depart, being torn from their deep foundations; and the perpetual hills shall sooner be removed: sooner shall the sun, the glorious parent of the day; the moon, the silver regent of the night; be extinguished in their habitation, and stars rush from the darkened sky.

YOUR adversaries are many; your strength is small; your fears are multiplied; yet shall the principle of life, the habit of grace, the seed of God, remain. He whom you love, whom you fear, whom you serve; is able, is willing, to keep you from falling. He who has begun the good work in you will maintain, will increase, will accomplish the life of grace, and death of sin.

Infeebled

*On the Christian's perseverance.* 197

Infeebled you may be, like a bruised reed ; a smoking flax ; a withered tree, whose fruits and leaves are nipped by surly winter ; but you shall not be destroyed. Rejoice not against them, ye enemies of their salvation ; triumph not over them, ye powers of darkness ; for though they fall, they shall arise again.

QUESTION not his power. Thus saith the faithful and true witness, " My Father is greater than all ; " and none is able," whether by power or guile, " to pluck them out " of my Father's hand \*." Is any thing too hard for the Lord, who spoke into existence this solid earth, and yonder glorious orbs ? who holds them in the hollow of his hand ? How many are the wonders

\* John x. 29.

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he has done, both in the heights above, and deeps beneath! But has he produced, and shall he be unable to preserve the vital principle, though like a living spark amidst an ocean of corruption?

DOUBT not his will, more than his power. It is the will of God your sanctification. For lo, a Trinity of persons are in concert, as to produce, so to maintain thy grace.

If there be any immutability of thy purpose; if any stability of thy covenant; if any veracity of thy promise, O eternal Father, we shall not die, but live. From the beginning has thou chosen them to salvation; and it is not possible they should be deceived, even by those impostors who do great signs and wonders.



wonders \*. Once hast thou sworn by thy holiness; thou wilt not lie unto the mystical David; that he shall see his seed, and that they shall be established before thee. Thou wilt not retake thy gift to thine eternal Son; for thou art not a man that thou should repent. But in what smiling promises hast thou plighted thy veracity, and declared the perpetuity of thy counsel? "I will be to them a God: I will give them one heart and way, to fear me all the days of their life; and I will make an everlasting covenant with them; and I will not turn away from them to do them good; and I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me for ever §. For though the moun-

\* Matth. xxiv. 24.

§ Jer. xxxii. 38.

" tains

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" tains shall depart, and the hills  
" be removed, my loving kind-  
" nefs shall not depart from thee,  
" and the covenant of my peace  
" shall not be removed, faith the  
" Lord, that hath mercy on thee\*."

AND shouldst not thou, O blessed Jesus, preserve with the most inviolable regard the gift of thy heavenly Father? Too dear they cost thee, O suffering Son of God, to suffer any the least believer to fall away, and perish. For them thou left the skies; for them didst weep, and sweat great drops of blood, and groan, and die. And shall they not persevere unto the end? Yes: if prayers, if intercessions can ought avail. " Holy Father, keep  
" them through thine own name."

\* Is. liv.

Thus

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Thus he addressed the glorious throne, while yet a sojourner of earth. Nor is he now unmindful of his brethren in the realms on high; for while he breathed terrestrial air, he promised his drooping friends, "I will pray the Father, and he shall send you another Comforter, and he shall abide with you for ever." See him surrounded with prostrate seraphim! What joy and gladness in his countenance! What heaven in his eyes! Mark how the keys of hell and death depend upon his girdle! Fear not, my beloved people, "because I live, ye shall live also." "I am he which liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore; and I have the keys of hell and death;" to lock the prison-doors upon these ugly monsters. O blessed

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ed Redeemer, if we being enemies were reconciled to God, our incensed Creator, by thy death; much more being reconciled shall we be saved from falling away by thy life.

NOR dost thou, almighty Spirit, less insure our final perseverance; who dwellest in our souls, and makest our bodies thy living temple; who abidest in us a well of living water, springing up unto everlasting life. Thou art the abiding unction, the incorruptible seed of God, the joyful earnest of the heavenly inheritance. By thee are we sealed unto the day of redemption: who shall dare to break up these living epistles, and deface the sacred characters of thy law, which thou hast written in our hearts?

*On*



*On assurance of present and future  
happiness.*

THE assured Christian is a rare and happy person, whose conscience bears him witness in the Holy Ghost, that his faith is unfeigned; his love sincere; his fear filial; his repentance evangelical. And being pleasingly conscious of those prints of divine grace in his own heart, which are the fruits of past election, and the buds of future glory, firmly concludes, that he is in a state of favour with God, and an heir of the heavenly inheritance. He does not at all pretend unto extraordinary revelations; but comparing the frame of his own soul with the characters of the children of

of

of God, he is persuaded, both from the outward declarations of the word, and the inward testimony of the Spirit, that he dwelt upon the heart of a loving God from everlasting; and that every gracious promise shall be his inheritance at the last. For by the mouth of these two witnesses, the Spirit and the word, he is established in the truth of this delightful persuasion. Therefore he knows, that it is no enthusiastic dream, or diabolical suggestion; but a sober certainty of waking bliss. It is true indeed, he may not on all occasions be able to maintain such an exalted frame as this. Through temptation, desertion, the prevalence of corruption, he may walk in darkness, and have no light. But while he trusts in the name of the Lord, and stays himself

himself on his God, the clouds are scattered, and his former assurance returns to him again with brighter evidence; as clear shining after the rain; or blooming health after a fit of sickness.

BUT O the blissful serenity of his soul, when drinking in the cheerful rays of the Almighty's countenance! He is calm as the evening of the summer; and peaceful as the shades of the night. The sun puts on a better beam, and every creature rejoices around him. He eats his bread with joy, and drinks his wine with a merry heart. The lying vanities of the world are totally neglected. An empire, in his balance, weighs a grain. The darkest night of affliction is illuminated by the spark-

lings of this white stone. For he is persuaded, that the afflictions of this present life, cannot disannul the everlasting love of God: as the law, which was four hundred years after, could not disannul the promise before confirmed of God in Christ. Sometimes he has devoured torments, and come with an appetite unto the flames. When the water-pots have been filled to the brim, the waters of affliction have been turned into the wine of consolation. He has played upon the hole of the asp, and put his hand into the den of the cockatrice. "O death," he says, "where is thy sting? There is none like him in all the earth, who is made without fear. He is the chief of the ways of God; the noblest work of the Almighty. With what alacrity



lacrity he runs the way of God's commandments! How sin is im-bittered to his soul! How duties are sweetened! Not all the terrors of Sinai; the lightnings that flashed; the thunders that roared; when God came from Teman, and the holy One from mount Paran; could have such powerful influence to mollify the heart, as one drop of this dew that descendeth upon the mountains of Zion. How he twines about a precept! How he longs for a duty! How he catches an opportunity! And, fearful of offending, he works out his own salvation with fear and trembling. How can he live in sin, when he is dead unto it? How can he walk in darkness, when he has fellowship with God? How can he hanker after the husks of the swine, when feeding on the

childrens bread? or desire the onions and the garlic of Egypt, when eating the hidden manna, and gathering the clusters of Canaan?

YE children of this world, whose little souls are captivated with low and perishable vanities; what can you produce equal unto his glorious prerogative? We may apply what was said in another case by Gideon; "Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer."

*On death.*

O DEATH, how dismal thy appearance! how grizly are thy features,

features, to those whose thoughts cannot overlook this present transitory scene of things! who have not learned to expatiate in the unknown regions of eternity, and know not where they shall fix their everlasting abode! How dost thou rend the man in twain, bursting the silver cord which knit the soul and body into one! From what dost thou snatch us away? To what regions dost thou convey us? Through what dark paths wilt thou conduct us from this world to the next? These all conspire to heighten thy terror, and make thy gloom more dreadful.

THOU riflest the treasures of the anxious miser, and fulliest all the honours of the proud. At thy command the drunkard makes haste

to finish his debauch, and the delicious epicure becomes the sweet repast of worms and reptiles. How wilt thou quench each burning lust in thy cold, icy arms, O king of terrors! The man of letters forgets his favourite books, which now in vain adorn the shelves covered with dust. The sceptered hand now drops the reins of government. The stately rooms of the palace no more behold their honoured lord. Thou changest our countenance, and sendest us away. No more shall we behold our joyous home; our pleasing and affectionate relations; nor the cheerful face of the day, nor the delightful variations of the seasons. By thee, for ought we know, the stars are blown out as to us, the sun and  
moon



moon are extinguished in their habitation.

AND whither, O whither wilt thou carry us, when we renounce our correspondence with the sun? When our dull body drops into the grave, and rots away unseen, where wilt thou send our trembling souls? What sights shall we see? What sounds shall we hear? With whom shall we converse? Alas! it is a state of which we are ignorant; a world of spirits and disembodied beings, with whom we have no familiarity here.

How dark is the transition! how dreary is the path that leads us through thy deep and shady vale, O death! To whom have thy gates been opened? Who knows thy  
thy

thy secret chambers? No mortal  
ere returned to tell us what thou  
art.

YET must we tread the dismal  
road; nor are our steps to be re-  
called when fairly entered on it.  
No man hath power to retain the  
breath of his nostrils; neither hath  
he power in the day of wrath.  
How universal is thy dominion!  
how cruel is thy appetite, which  
never says, It is enough! Long  
hast thou spread desolation through  
the universe; not among beasts  
and plants alone, but also among  
man's imperial race, in every pe-  
riod of time. Void of compassion  
for the smiling infant; the bloom-  
ing youth; the venerable sage;  
thou blindest them in undistin-  
guished ruin. Thou regardest not  
the

the forces of strength; the charms of beauty; nor the golden bribes of riches. Thou pourest contempt upon princes, in whom we cannot therefore safely trust; and upon all the sons of men, in whom there is no stay, because they are born to die.

“WHAT man is he that liveth,  
“and shall not see death?” We need not search for thee in the plains of battle; in the rocks and billows of the ocean; nor on the loaded tables of luxury and intemperance. Numberless accidents, and ghastly bands of pale diseases, surround us in terrible array. But accidents apart, and pale diseases set aside, old age soon cuts the thread of life, and hastens thy approach. Threescore and ten, or fourscore revolving

ving winters, may perhaps be numbered by us. Alas! how soon is this period exhausted! How exceeding diminutive it shews in reason's eye! and in the eye of him who is just now to render up the ghost! As the shuttle sweeps over the loom in the twinkling of an eye; as the post, who carrying some message of importance, is dispatched away, gains upon the road, and takes no time to view the adjacent country; as the ship which has the wind in her wings, skims over the watery plain; and as the fleet eagle, who spies out his prey from on high, descends with headlong precipitation; so flies our momentary duration.

YET boast not of thy victories  
over the human race, thou unrelenting



lenting tyrant! There are who can behold thee with a smile, and laugh at the shaking of thy spear. Jesus, the loving Saviour, received into his soul thy fatal sting, and wrought out all thy deadly venom. In vain you thought to hold him under thy gloomy dominion: for "though he was dead, yet he is "alive again, and liveth ever-  
"more." He entered thy dreary gates, and tasted of thy bitter cup for every elect man. Why should we fear to taste thee, or tread thy dreary vale, when the Breaker is gone up before us; who leads the blind in a way they know not, and in paths they have not known?

REPINE at death? Why should the mournful prisoner take in bad part the kindly office that unties his

his fetters, and overturns the walls of his dungeon? Why should the child repine to burst the narrow confinement of the womb, and salute the rejoicing light of day! Ought not the weary pilgrim to bless the day which returns him to his Father's house? and the espoused bride to rejoice in the hour when she is presented to her faithful Bridegroom without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing?

THOUGH thy pains, O death, were as terrible as a timorous imagination paints them, (which yet they cannot be, when the sensation is gone); yet should we soon forget our miseries, by reason of those transporting scenes which shall straightway unfold unto our view.  
How

How soundly shall our dust sleep  
in the peaceful grave, thy dark and  
solitary mansion! where we shall  
not be pained with the gnawing of  
the worm; nor offended by the  
nauseous stench; nor wearied with  
the dismal solitude; nor frightened  
with the surrounding darkness.  
These are the terrors of the living,  
not the dead.

IT is true, the pleasant enjoy-  
ments of time are ours no more.  
But neither are the sins nor the  
sorrows. We bid farewell to the  
streams; but we bathe in the foun-  
tain of felicity. We shall no more  
behold the ways of men; nor see  
the glory of the Lord in the land of  
the living: yet shall we come to  
God, the Judge of all; to Jesus, the  
Mediator of the new covenant;

and to the innumerable company of angels, and spirits of just men made perfect.

WHITHER canst thou carry us, O death, from the presence of that God, whose loving-kindness is better than life? When with thy trident thou shalt break the pitcher of this mortal frame; the deathless soul is not like water spilt upon the ground: for the pitcher being broken at the fountain, it runs to its original, and can be gathered up again.

HAIL happy day, that destroyest the last enemy; in which the sleeping bones shall hear the call, and reunite into a system! How shall the reproach of the grave be wiped away, when that which was  
sown



sown in dishonour, and shameful putrefaction, shall be raised in glory? Then, O death, we shall no more be subject to thy power; when we shall call eternal life and immortality our own. "Rejoice not  
" against me, O mine enemy; for  
" though I fall by thy hand, I shall  
" arise again; and when I sit in  
" darkness in the grave, even then  
" the Lord will be a light unto  
" me."

*On the resurrection.*

**S**HALL death always triumph over the human race, and hold these prisoners of the tomb in everlasting chains? Will the Lord for

ever despise the work of his hands? nor ever more repair these heaven-laboured frames of flesh? Shall those holy hands, that were devoutly lifted up to heaven; those knees, that often were bended in humble supplication before the throne; those tongues, that talked of his wonderful works, and uttered his praises; and all the other instruments of righteousness, for ever lie in rubbish? Shall the expectation of the poor always fail? Have the martyrs bled in vain, who were tortured, not accepting deliverance? Faithful is he who hath promised, who also will do it. It is the work of death to part the body from the soul; and then the grave eats up our flesh, and even gnaws our bones. Yet shall your works be destroyed, ye frightful

ful monsters; bone shall come to his bone; dust to his dust; and every parted soul re-enter its ancient habitation.

IF it is marvellous in your eyes, should it be marvellous in his eyes, whose understanding is infinite; whose power is not to be conceived? Lift up your eyes on high; who hath created all these God-like luminaries, and marshals all their host? Behold, he formed the eye, and bored the ear, and fashioned all your members. By whom is his arm shortened, that he is not able to restore his workmanship when gone to dissolution? We understand not the powers of angels; we are struck with admiration at the curious arts, and witty inventions, of puny mortals; and won-

der how it is possible for them to give being to such elaborate productions. The art of the painter is deservedly amazing to those who are not formed by nature with such mysterious skill. How is the poor Indian amazed at the moving machines of watches and clocks, which are easily formed by European artists! With what inimitable art the skilful musician swells his notes, and sweeps the vocal strings! Are the ways of men above our shallow reach; and shall the ways of God be fully understood, seeing they are higher than our ways, as the heavens are higher than the earth?

WHEN the mystery of God shall be finished, and the pregnant decree shall have travailed with her  
last



last birth, the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God. Behold, consider, and admire; the man of sorrows, who was crucified, dead, and buried, is the God who quickens the dead. Even those are made alive by him, who imbrued their hands in his blood; who pierced his hands and feet.

“ To this end he both died, rose,  
“ and revived, that he might be  
“ the Lord of the quick and  
“ dead.”

OSHRILL-VOICED trump of God,  
(whatever thou art), how shalt thou  
wound the rest of many generations! The king shall hear thee  
beneath the vaulted marble, and  
shall come forth without his crown;  
and

and the peasant, who sleeps beneath the grassy turf, shall arise at thy command. Ocean shall hear and tremble in his deepest caverns; and render up his dead, which long did float upon his surface, and weltered to the winds, and at last were devoured by the finny inhabitants of the floods.

POPULOUS assembly! Not one amissing of past, present, and future generations. Neither can they die any more. For, O thou last enemy! destructions are come to a perpetual end. Though you have razed cities, and their memorial is perished with them; now, in your turn, you shall be swallowed up in victory. How glad would the ungodly be to find thee, when pulled out like sheep for the slaughter!

slaughter! They shall lift up, in that awful hour, a cry after thee, far more doleful than what was heard in Egypt, in the night fatal to their first-born. Gladly would they search for thee in the bottom of the ocean; or penetrate into the centre through interposing rocks, to find thee. But thou shalt flee from them, and leave them to eat the fruit of their ways. Think on this dismal tragedy, ye dead in trespasses and sins. Yet are ye the prisoners of hope. Christ is the resurrection and the life. Believe on him; and though ye be dead, then shall you live. Repent and be converted every one of you, that your sins may be blotted out, and not found, when they shall be sought for, when the times

of

of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

TIMES of refreshing indeed to all the followers of the Lamb! Then shall his going forth be prepared as the morning, after a melancholy night of blackness, and darkness, and tempest; or as the beauteous spring, when she comes after a furly winter, to strow the earth with flowers, and clothe the naked trees in green attire. “Awake, and sing,” shall he say, “ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs; and the earth shall cast forth her dead, and shall no more cover her slain.”

THEN shall those who perhaps expired in mutual wounds, join hand



hand and hand, and mutually partake in the Redeemer's purchase. There Mephibosheths are not lame; nor Leahs tender-eyed; nor shall Timothy be any more subject to his often infirmities. For he shall change our vile body, and make it like that glorious one which he himself doth wear. Farewel to pining sickness. Adieu, ye ghastly band of pale diseases, distempers lingering and acute, hunger, and thirst, and weariness. No more, O balmy sleep! shall we need thy welcome refreshment, when that which is sown in dishonour, shall be raised in glory.

GREAT is your gain, ye saints, when ye exchange time for eternity! Nor is it only gain to your undying souls, but even to your putrefying

putrefying clay; which, with inconceivable improvement, shall be restored you again. Nor is it a doubtful event. Ye dead men of the Lord, together with his dead body shall you arise. For you he visited the gloomy mansion of the grave. Your Redeemer has warmed your cold clay bed, and left a most delightful odour in the noisome sepulchre. He who brought Israel out of Egypt; and Jonah from the belly of the fish; and Daniel from the den of lions; will surely bring you from the grave: for the temples of the Holy Ghost will not always lie in rubbish; nor the members of the body of Christ for ever be forgotten in the pit of corruption. The Lord Jesus Christ he is the head, the living head; and ye are the members of his body, of  
his

*On the resurrection and judgment.* 229

his flesh, and of his bones. He is the first-fruits; and ye are the full harvest. He is the first-begotten from the dead; and ye, as the younger brethren, shall be begotten in your season. And with your clay, your characters shall rise, and your righteousness shall go forth as the light. For by the resurrection from the dead, ye shall, like Christ, be declared the sons of God with power.

*On the resurrection and judgment.*

THERE is a time, (who knows how near?); when, according to the tenor of the sacred oracles, the mystery of God shall be finished; the Lord himself shall descend with a shout; the dead shall be raised;

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the

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the living shall be changed; the world shall be judged. Whatever great or dreadful has been atchieved under the sun, falls infinitely short of the transactions of this awful day. Mercifully has our gracious God suppressed this day and hour in darkness, that we may never intermit our watch. O did we make this wise improvement of it!

METHINKS the awful period is arrived. The drousy world is lost in security: little dreaming of an extinguished sun, or falling stars. Some will be buying and selling in the market; some will be debauching in the tavern; some will be planting trees; some will be building houses; some will be marrying, and giving in marriage; when, lo!  
the



*On the resurrection and judgment. 231*

the dreadful sound of a trumpet,  
blown by a strong-lung'd angel,  
(perhaps the same that once was  
heard on Sinai waxing louder and  
louder), shall wound the ear of Na-  
ture, proclaiming the approach of  
the Judge, that an end, an end is  
come, and the fashion of this world  
passeth away.

“BEHOLD, he cometh with  
“clouds:” innumerable angels attend  
his approach, and pour around his  
chariot: his radiant face eclipses  
the lustre of the sun: beneath him  
a great throne, white as the snow,  
and fiery as the flame. Is this he  
who was born in Bethlehem, and  
groaned in Calvary? whom ye in-  
sulted, O malicious Jews, bending  
your knees before him in solemn  
mockery? Say now, mistaken Ca-

japhas, whether did he or thou blaspheme.

LONG had the prisoners of the grave slept in darkness: but now they awake out of their iron sleep; they shake off the slumber of a thousand ages. Now monuments render back their dust; church-yards and burial-grounds pant and heave. Even palaces will then be found to have been but upper chambers to a tomb. And the ocean itself will seem to have been paved with human skulls. Strange to behold! the fragments of bodies will fly through the air, to obey the signal of the trumpet, and join their fellow-members, however distant. Ask not, ye profane, how can it be? For who hath shortened his arm? He who knit your bodies together

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gether at the first, can reunite your scattered dust, though the four winds were warring for it. Three days did the prophet Jonah suffer a living death in the belly of the fish; but when the third morning gilded the mountains, and played upon the billows, the obedient monster returned his sacred guest untouched on the safe shore. So at the appointed season, the grave, at the command of God, shall cast forth her dead, and the earth shall no more cover her slain.

MEAN time the living shall undergo a change equivalent unto death, and this mortal shall put on immortality. This is a great mystery. Here let us leave it under a veil, and proceed to take a view of that most populous assembly, where

234 *On the resurrection and judgment.*

Adam shall salute his youngest son,  
The billows are not so numerous  
that break upon the shore, nor the  
stars that glitter in the firmament.  
The edict of the almighty King  
shall sweep an area for this vast  
congregation. Here all civil distinctions  
are buried. The mighty  
Cesar stands upon a level with the  
meanest of the throng. No respect  
is paid to him that wore imperial  
purple. Here the great heroes of  
antiquity shall stand unmarked and  
unadored.

SEE there on the left hand of  
the Judge, that direful croud, pale  
with horror and amazement! How  
their eye-balls roll in wild affright!  
What despair is in every gesture!  
Most gladly would they bless the  
grave to cover them; the flames to  
wrap



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wrap them; the rocks to hide them; or the seas to sweep them from the presence of him that sits upon the throne.-----But mark on the right hand that triumphant assembly, who face the thunders with dauntless magnanimity! when the stars are falling, their thoughts are fixed: when the earth is quaking, their heart is unappalled. They view, with calm serenity, the yawning gulf, the glorious Judge; and hail the happy morning of the resurrection. Are these the forms that mouldered in the dust! What rosy youth smiles in their countenances! Once did they lie among the pots of sin and misery; but now they are made as a dove, whose wings are covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold. Not one  
finer

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sinner shall stand in this vast congregation of the righteous.

*On the misery of the damned.*

CANST thou descend, O my soul! with awful step, into the doleful regions of damnation? Let thy heart meditate terror. The more shall thy fears be alarmed to fly from the wrath to come in this thy day of merciful visitation: the more shall thy gratitude be awakened unto thy loving Saviour, who redeems thy life from destruction, and who says unto thee, "Fear not, I have the keys of hell and death." But have the doors of the shadow of death been opened  
unto

unto us? Who can presume to give the geography of this dismal territory, or confidently say, in what place of this large universe eternal justice has ordained this doleful dungeon? Whether it shall be in the centre of the earth; or in some blazing comet; or far beyond the limits of this lightsome world, where chaos and eternal darkness reign; he only knows, before whom hell and destruction have no covering. No thoughts can reach, no words can paint the horrors of this dreary region, where the miserable inhabitants drink of the wrath of the Almighty, and know, by dreadful experience, what is the power of his anger. Waving the metaphorical descriptions of darkness, worms, and fire; there dwells the most restless and unsatisfied desire;  
the

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the most overwhelming shame; the most horrible fear; the most dismal sorrow; the most tormenting envy; the most unrelenting hardness of heart; and the most racking despair.

THEY hunger, but there is no food to relieve their appetite: they thirst, but there is no refreshing fountain, nor even a cooling drop. Should sensual appetites remain, they never can be gratified. As Heathen poets sung of Tantalus, burning with thirst and hunger: gladly would he snatch at the delicious apples hanging over his head, or steal a cooling draught of water, that came up to his chin: but no sooner did he make the fruitless attempt, than the apples fled from his grasp, and the waters from  
his



his taste. So shall they “snatch  
“on the right hand, and be hun-  
“gry; and they shall eat on the left,  
“and shall not be satisfied: they  
“shall eat every man the flesh of  
“his own arm.”

How will the impropriety of their  
past conduct expose them to the  
bitter taunts of insulting devils,  
and to the painful upbraidings of  
their own hearts! Fools that we  
were, for one morsel of meat, to  
sell our heavenly birthright! for  
such transitory delights; for such  
little sips of polluted joy; to awaken  
these everlasting flames!

WHAT fearfulness and trembling  
shall come upon them, when they  
behold the angry face of God clad  
with an everlasting frown! Who  
can

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can behold it, and not be fore amazed! Even the Son of God did sweat great drops of blood when he beheld it. How then shall these feeble creatures endure!

Lo! heaven shuts its everlasting doors upon them, while their minds are haunted with the ghastly apparitions of their departed joys. How keen must be the sorrow! how cutting the anguish of such a thought! I have eternally lost the incomparable happiness of yonder blessed abodes. Where are ye now, my pleasing comforts? How have you fled away as a vision of the night?

NOR will it be a small part of their misery, to envy the prosperity of the righteous, when they shall seize their heavenly thrones, and  
tune

tune their harps to strains of highest rapture. When "their horn shall  
" be exalted with honour, the wicked shall see it, and be grieved:  
" he shall gnash with the teeth,  
" and melt away."

O SHOCKING to think! they will eternally hate the eternal Excellency, because they are hated of him. No more shall the divine Spirit excite the faintest motion in their minds towards God or holiness. The iron sinew of their stubborn will, will grow more hard by these fierce flames. They may indeed repent; but their repentance worketh death.

HERE hope supports under the greatest pressures; but there that anchor shall be broken. Here the sons of sorrow will sometimes sink

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in soft repose; the couch will ease their complaint; and kind officious friends will fall on various methods to blunt the edge of the sharpest pain. Even the tortured wretch, though dying hard and slow, may comfort himself with this, that his torments will shortly come to an end. But these can hope for no respite, nor period of their woes. How would it stamp a bow in their cloud, to think there were an end! But in vain, should they shed an ocean of tears, and stretch out their suppliant hands. Death will flee from them, consigning them over to flat despair. Have pity upon them, O ye their friends. Will no affectionate relation shed a compassionate tear? Alas! the father will not pity his children, and the mother will have no compassion

on



on the son of her womb: for they sing Hallelujah when the smoke of their torment ascendeth for ever and ever.

SURELY "such are the dwellings  
" of the wicked: and this is the  
" place of him that knoweth not  
" God." O my soul! envy not their  
momentary happiness, "come not  
" into their secret, be not united  
" unto their assembly." How much  
better is it for thee to strive to enter  
in at the strait gate, with these  
happy few that find it, than to go  
with the multitude in the broad  
way that leadeth unto destruction?  
Canst thou fly too fast from hell  
and damnation? Canst thou be too  
careful to avoid those paths, which,  
though strewed with roses, lead  
down to the chambers of death?

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Whether is it better thy flesh should murmur, or thy soul should perish? O that knowing these terrors of the Lord, our whole life might be one constant flight from the wrath that is to come! How miserable are they who will not be persuaded of the reality of everlasting torments, by all the threatenings of the word, when it is declared by the faithful and true Witness, "If they will not believe Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one should arise from the dead!"

*On the happiness of heaven.*

**G**LORIOUS things are spoken of thee, O city of God! and of those

those happy beings who walk thy golden streets, and dwell in thy ivory palaces. They are all of them kings and priests unto God. Hail, ye highly favoured of the Lord, ye nations of them that are saved! Now have ye received power over the nations of numerous corruptions, and rule them with a rod of iron.----A crown, not of flowers, which fade, not of gold, which is also a corruptible thing; but of glory, of righteousness, of life, shall flourish on your heads. The throne of Christ himself receives you. Eternal shall be your triumph, ye happy victors, who have more than conquered. Therefore are ye arrayed in white robes; palms are in your hands; songs of salvation in your mouths.----The Lord is your inheritance, ye royal priesthood.

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By Jesus Christ your altar, shall you offer up the sacrifices of praise continually. You shall go no more out from the heavenly temple, as did the legal priests below; for he shall make you as the pillars of Jachin and Boaz in the temple of your God.---In what flowery paths, by what living waters, shall the Lamb in the midst of the throne conduct you, ye flock of his pasture, for whom your good Shepherd did give his very life! Under what verdant shades shall you repose, where the sun shall not light on you, nor any heat! O happy rest from sin and sorrow into which ye have entered, ye people of God! No more shall ye weary yourselves in the greatness of your way. Your understandings shall rest in the contemplation of truth; your wills  
in



in the fruition of good. Every wish is crowned, every desire is gratified by God himself, your exceeding great reward. Plentiful feast to which ye are invited, where you feed upon the hidden manna, and taste that the Lord is good. No more shall pale famine approach your blessed abodes, who are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb. O blissful vision to which you are admitted! No more you see through a glass darkly. Not the back-parts only, but the face and similitude of the Lord shall you behold. All ye beholding with open face this glory of the Lord, shall be satisfied and sanctified at once. With joy, and in righteousness, shall ye see his face. But, O thou exceeding great and eternal weight of glory! Eye hath not seen thee, ear hath not  
heard

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heard thee, heart hath not conceived. What tongue, what pen of angels can describe thee? Therefore by such variety of metaphors art thou shadowed out in the book of God.

O HEAVENLY Father! give me the light of the knowledge of thy glory. Irradiate my mind, O divine Spirit! that in thy light I may know what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

As delicious meat unto the taste; as fragrant perfume unto the smell; as melodious accents to the ear; as delightful colours to the eye: so is the knowledge of wisdom unto the soul. But “where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?” In vain you search

search for it in these dull regions. Here, with laborious assiduity, we dig for her as for hid treasures. When found by many a painful effort, how far from satisfactory? Neither do we find that knowledge is productive of holiness in heart and life. How many, like that prodigious image, which Daniel beheld in the visions of the night, have added feet of fordid clay, to heads of purest gold? But in that happy country, the night of intellectual darkness no more attends her dusky shade. The tree of knowledge is the tree of life in the celestial paradise. Then each mysterious doctrine in religion shines brighter than the light, and full day pours on all the paths of heaven. How are the channels of the deep waters discovered, through which  
the

the Almighty held his darksome way?

SIN too is banished from those bright abodes: for the people that dwell there shall be all righteous. No more shall the body of sin, and power of indwelling corruptions, fetch the deep groan from the bottom of the heart. That root of bitterness which hereaway was left, with bands of iron and brass, is quite extirpated. No more shall Jacob and Esau struggle in the womb of the sanctified ones; nor the law in the members war against the law of the mind. It is true, the militant graces shall resign, when every enemy lies prostrate on the field. Victorious faith and hope now enter into rest. But charity never faileth. Charity, which is the



the fulfilling of the law, shall burn in purest flames for ever and ever. Happy, thrice happy they, who have attained this holy perfection. Your harps shall be always tuned, and your garments always white. Now are ye eased of your greatest burden, and rescued from the hands of your deadliest foe. No more shall wandering thoughts annoy your heart, nor idle words flow from your tongue. While we, alas! must sore complain of vanity, perverseness, and disorder in mind, will, and affection.

NEITHER shall there be any more pain; for sorrow shall be turned into joy. O ye that rejoice in God above all, and in Christ Jesus, with joy unspeakable, though now ye see him not; how shall you be comforted,

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comforted, when you shall behold his face in righteousness, wearing sweet smiles! Will it not be good for you to be with him, who died for you? with him where he is, that you may behold his glory? Then shall you see those hands and feet that were pierced; that side which was wounded; that head which wore the thorny crown. Is this the man who groaned and died in Calvary for me! who descended into the grave for me! Yes; this is the man, the God-man, Jesus the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever. No flight of years shall dissolve the mysterious union of his humanity with the divine person of the eternal Son.

ALL their springs of consolation  
are derived from this fountain of  
living

living waters; yet are there other considerations in which they shall rejoice, though with inferior delight. Then shall they come to you, ye innumerable company of angels; nor be startled at familiar interviews with you, though disembodied creatures, as they were in their mortal state. Here you were the spectators of their conflicts, and the guardians of their virtue; then shall ye be the associates of their bliss.

O COMFORTABLE society! Then too shall we come to the general assembly and church of the first-born. Those who have lived in distant periods of the world, shall meet in one congregation. The inhabitants of distant regions shall be there; those who dwelt in Bri-

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tain and Judea. O large communion! which no distance of time, no length of sea or land, shall confine; no animosity shall corrupt, world without end. There our grand parents eat the tree of life, no flaming sword forbidding all access. The patriarchs shall wander no more as pilgrims and strangers, having found the country they desired. There shall we see the venerable saint, whose faith enabled him to obey, without reluctance, the most difficult precept that ever was given; and him, whose invincible patience triumphed over the greatest load of calamities. There shall we see the prophets who foretold, and the apostles who published the power and coming of his Majesty; and all the goodly company, who loved not their lives un-

to



to the death, but rendered their lives, by cruel tortures, for the love of the truth. How frequently is that complaint of the prophet to be taken up in these regions of sorrow, "Wo is me; for I am as when they  
"gather the summer-fruits, and  
"there is no cluster to eat; the  
"good man is perished out of the  
"land!" But no sinner shall be there, no deceitful hypocrite in all the fair association.

NOR will they be insensible of joy from the glories of that delightful place where they shall dwell. O the novelty, the beauty, the grandeur of the heaven of heavens, the house not made with hands, the city that hath foundations, infinitely surpassing the temple of Solomon, and the city of David! Beautiful

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tiful was the earthly paradise; and beautiful the earthly Canaan; yea, beautiful is this habitable earth, where many of the enemies to God reside. What then must be the heavenly paradise, the heavenly Canaan, which God hath prepared for them that love him!

AND O with what fair bodies shall they be clothed, who have put on immortality! "The inhabitant of that land shall not say, "I am sick;" but their countenance shall smile with rosy celestial youth for evermore.

THE hell they have avoided will accent their songs of salvation; and the world they have escaped will serve as a foil to their bliss. Thus it enhanced the miraculous deliverance

ance of the Israelites, to see from the safe shore the wretched Egyptians tumbling in the ocean; and as the waste and howling wilderness gave additional charms to the land that flowed with milk and honey.

NOR will you be inactive through long eternity. You rest not day nor night; yet shall you be strangers to weariness and fatigue. To praise him shall be your element; to teach the arches of your lofty palaces to resound with the name of him you loved, will be your delightful employment, while ages roll away.

FOR, O eternity! eternity! it is thine to crown the joys above. Thou art the knot which bindest the  
the

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the bundle of life together. Without the thought of thee, dim sadness would not spare the faces of the blessed, their songs would be marred with dreadful discordance, and all the blissful bowers would lose their charms.

*The end of VOLUME FIRST.*





